

DRAKE WAS MY CAPTAIN

Douglas Bell

DRAKE WAS MY CAPTAIN

What the story is about

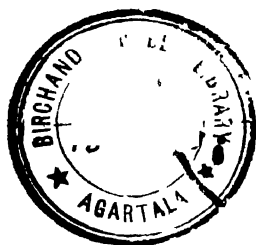
THIS is the story of a man who sailed the seas with Francis Drake.

Jonathan Heard—who tells his own story—first sailed to Guinea and the Spanish Main as a gunner's mate with the little Devon captain; and for the next twenty-odd years the sea was ever his first love.

Captured by the Turks and made to work in the galleys until he escaped at the battle of Lepanto; later a victim of the dreaded Inquisition; he escaped once more to sail with Raleigh's captains to Virginia, to take part in the rout of the Spanish Armada, and to earn prize-money in the capture of treasure-ships—and in remembering all this he creates a vivid picture of seafaring life in the days of Queen Elizabeth I.

Douglas Bell

DRAKE WAS MY CAPTAIN



FREDERICK WARNE AND CO. LTD
LONDON AND NEW YORK

LONDON
1912

TO MY WIFE.

*Steel-true and blade-straight
The Great Artificer made my mate**
R L. S.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

| | | |
|------|------------------|-----|
| I | PLYMOUTH SOUND | 7 |
| II | BLACK CARGO | 23 |
| III | LONDON | 48 |
| IV | GALLEYS | 67 |
| V | THE HOLY OFFICE | 91 |
| VI | ESCAPE | 119 |
| VII | AMERICA | 138 |
| VIII | ARMADA | 163 |
| IX | PRIZE-MONEY | 187 |
| X | THE LOST LEADERS | 213 |
| XI | NO MORE SEA | 232 |

CHAPTER I

PLYMOUTH SOUND

WHERE'S my pipe to? Dick, my pipe. Not a new one, but the little black coloury clay. Found it, have ye? Ah! Always polish the bowl so, against your nose: it makes him shine proper. What our fathers did without a pipe of tobacco to solace their evening time I know not. Perhaps men were more quarrelsome then. There is nothing under heaven like this herb to soothe the evil humours, to take the sting out of failure, and calm the mind in triumph.

Hand me a coal in the fire-tongs, Nephew. Praised be God for the blue curling smoke, the greatest blessing out of the Indies, better than all the gold and jewels. In the Spanish Indies the Dons roll up the whole dried leaf into *cigars*, set light to one end, and draw the smoke into themselves, voiding it through their nostrils. 'Tis said, and I have found it so, that tobacco taken thus is a powerful purge. Infused and drunk, it cureth fevers, and by the laying on of the green leaf to a hurt or bruise, the same may be healed.

Pity 'tis, 'tis so dear. Twenty years ago, tobacco in London was five shillings the ounce. In these times it cometh so freely into the realm that though the habit hath so spread, 'tis far cheaper now. Still, it be dear, sure enough. They say that King James, up to London, hateth tobacco (God forgive him),

and hath inveighed mightily against it. God Save the King, say I, but yet he is but a Scotsman and a foreigner. Between you and me, Dick, they say he cannot hold a candle to our dead English queen. Mr. Hawkins, he who first brought tobacco into England, told me that he had seen the Queen make trial of the herb in a pipe of clay. She was a Londoner, next best thing to a Devonshire woman. King Harry, her father, lived in London, and her mother had a Lord Mayor of London to her ancestry. I saw the Queen once, to Tilbury in Essex, at the time of the Armada fight in '88. My boy, have you ever heard twenty-five thousand men cheer? Only those in the front ranks could hear what she said to her soldiers, but they broke into a sudden heart-stirring roar, which was taken up regiment by regiment, like the waves of the sea thundering one after another against our Devon cliffs.

Ah, but you're wanting to hear a tale of the Ocean Sea, and here am I talking about tobacco. I'll be spinning a yarn so long as a main-top bowline, but I must begin at the proper place, which is the beginning. Bid me heave-to if I go a-wandering, and be easy with an old man's chatter. For I be feeling old these days, my nimbleness be going off. You cannot expect two forenoons in one day, can ye? I never told you aught when you were a little tacker. A man in middle life talks not much of himself. Such speech is the temptation of age. Douse the candles and sit in the dimsy by the firelight. You want a good back-stick to the fire.

As you know, I was born here in Topsham, at

the house in Fore Street where Reuben Ham lives now, within sound, smell, and sight of tidal water. My elder brothers, Simon, and Thomas your father, and your aunt Margery, were born there also. I entered this world in the year of our Lord 1551. Young Edward was King, and I was christened in the church with the new Prayer Book. Your grandfather was a merry laughing man. I remember him as of middling height, ruddy of face, with a short fair beard, and twinkling grey-blue eyes with creases at the corners. He did not trouble himself overmuch with the changing forms of religion. He accepted what the Church gave, went to Mass in Mary's time, and became a good Protestant under Queen Elizabeth. My mother was of a different temper, a good and faithful Protestant. She was what you would call a Puritan nowadays.

I remember, when I was ten years old, slipping off to Exeter Fair with a sixpence given me secretly by my father, buying fairings, confts, paying to see the Fat Woman, the Dwarf, and a performing bear standing on its forefeet, and being a little bewildered by the music, and the shouting. Just such a fair as the one in the city a few weeks ago; harmless enough. But I can see now my mother's cold, tight-lipped, wrathful visage. I was grown too great a boy to be whipped by her, and my father hastily took himself off. So all came to naught. Withal she was kind, in her severe fashion. Peace be with her, but I was my father's man.

I went to Exeter School, just as you did. A horse-dealer came down from Bampton Fair one autumn

morning, driving a number of Exmoor ponies into Exeter city, and my father bought one for me, so that I might ride to school. I put him up at the sign of the Dolphin in Preston Street. Still, you don't want to hear about my schooldays. Too much like your own. Reading, writing, the Latin grammar, painfully got and quickly forgot, beatings, fights, football—'tis so, Dick?

When I was fifteen, and a big strong lad, I had had enough of school, and was ripe to be apprenticed. Your grandfather founded the cider business. In those days he was a factor. He used to go round to the farms and bring in the cider for the taverns of Exeter. He built the press in Heard's Wharf, and bought apples. He even brought some apples over from Brest, and the Haven* in Normandy, when our crop was short. My earliest memory is seeing the old horse padding round and round with the stone roller breaking up the rosy red and yellow fruit in the circular trough. I remember the sharp tang when the great "cheese" of apple pulp began to spurt in the press, and my father and his man flung their weight on the screw handles. My father was minded to take my two elder brothers, Simon and your father, into the cider trade, but the business was too small for the three of us, with the gentry drinking more and more of these French and Canary wines. I had to look elsewhere.

There were two shipbuilding slips in Topsham, but the trade with Newfoundland in codfish and train-oil, into which all the young men go now, was

* Le Havre.

hardly begun. I had not thought of going to sea, nor of building ships. I wanted to be a merchant like my father.

"Father," said I, "there's more money to trading than there is in shipbuilding. I want to be a merchant, same as you, and be the proper sort of citizen."

"Hast never thought, then, son, of going to sea?"

"No, Father, can't say I have, much. In these peaceful times there is no prize-money. Only them that turn pirate grow to be rich."

"But there is nothing to be done here," said my father "And Exeter is fallen upon evil times. Too much woollen cloth is being made by all the West Country mills, and prices are falling, as is well known. Many men are idle and in want."

"Aye, but there is much more doing down to Plymouth, so they say."

Plymouth hath grown greatly these latter years, but even then, half a century ago, it was very much bigger than Topsham, and nearly as big as Dartmouth.

"You have here a cousin," said I. "Mr. Horrell—Mr. William Horrell, ships' chandler. He'd take me as apprentice on a word from you, I'll be bound. There's a chance of advancement in that port."

Ships from London, Portsmouth, South Hampton, and even West Country ports called at Plymouth for provision, victual, and refit. It was England's western gate, the entry to the Ocean Sea.

So I bade farewell to Topsham. I rode with my father along the Strand, where the nets were drying,

to say good-bye to the fishermen and sailors, sitting in the April sun. My mother had given me a deal of good advice, by which, had I taken greater heed, I might have saved myself a boatload of trouble. Father went with me to Plymouth town. We crossed the river by the ford near the Countess Weir. Labourers from Exeter were digging the canal at that time. We took the steep track up over to Haldon. There, high above the river valleys, a great wind blew. Beyond the Teign stood up the blue rampart of Dartmoor, a long line of rocky tors against the sun. Behind, the towers of the cathedral were gleaming white in the distance. Below, stretched fields of red earth and green pastures, like garnets set in emeralds, and the steel-blue line of the tidal river, on which was my home.

We rode through Chudleigh and rolling wooded country to Aishburton, and on for three long miles to Buckfastleigh. There we crossed the Dart, rushing down over stones from its lonely moorland. To the right, three bowshots' length from the crossing, you could see the ruined abbey of Buckfast, its tower still standing amid the desolation made by Master Thomas Cromwell in King Henry's time. We lay that night at Buckfastleigh. Next morning we came to Brent, and on the lonely patch of road under Ugborough moors, I remember, we met a Queen's messenger riding up to London. He shouted a greeting, but did not stop to exchange news and talk of the weather or the markets, as an ordinary wayfarer would do. With loose rein he pressed on. We had to crush our horses close in to the high

banks to let him pass, for the road thereabouts was very narrow. It was full of stones and mud, for the trees and the untrimmed hedges on the banks continually met overhead, so that neither sun nor wind could come in and dry up the lane. The only piece of hard going was a track for one horse's feet, and even that often failed. Everywhere else was a deep slough which caked on your boots and your horse's flanks. The banks were revetted with loose stones like to a dry wall. Were it not so, they would oft-times fall in and quite swallow up the road. 'Tis many years since I have been down along that way, but from what I hear, the going still is bad. The messenger splashed us all over as he floundered past. Said my father :

"In high summer these-yer Queen's messengers make the journey to London in thirty-six hours, changing horses at every post."

"Is that really true, Father. For 'tis hard to believe."

"Yes, 'tis true, pure enough."

So we went on to Ivybridge, the lambs in the meadows twinkling their tails. Then came a swampy stretch where we crossed the Yealm. We well-nigh stuck in the mud. My father's mare pulled her off hind-leg out of a morass with a resounding smack, and my father, leading her, was in up to his knees. We trotted through Plympton, and very soon saw the gleaming mud of the Plym at low tide.

Plymouth was a bustling place even then, not near so large as Exeter, but with more life and colour. There were the little fishing-boats lining the

quays of the Pool, the Barbican, and the sentries tramping up and down with their pikes, the Queen's ships and the merchantmen hugging the shore of Mount Batten. We put up our horses and walked the streets of the lower town, with Saint Andrew's great tower overlooking all. The justices with their officers and two drummers were beating the seamen out of the taverns to join their ships. *Rub-a-dub-dub* went the drums. The officers assailed the tavern doors with their staves. "Seamen, ahoy! To your ships! A fair wind!" Sometimes they entered and bundled out the men. The wind had gone to the nor'-east, and the gallant ships were ready to go. We passed a body of sailors, with gay-coloured woollen caps, stiff bristling beards, and tar-stained breeches, singing a chanty as they rolled along, more than a little drunk:

*"The master, the swabber, the 'bos'n, and I,
The gunner and his mate,
Loved Moll, Meg, and Marion and Margery,
But none of us cared for Kate."*

And much more about Kate, rough scurvy words, but a good tune.

Then there was the green beauty of the Hoe, the guns in their batteries, the look-out men, the glittering Sound, the Island, and Mount Edgecumbe. Flags were streaming seawards in the offshore breeze, and the Sound was flecked white with sails.

My father's cousin, Mr. Horrell, had his warehouse in Notte Street, near the Pool. He was a pur-

veyor of all sorts of provision and victual for the ships. We came out of the bright spring sunshine into the gloom of his sheds, where there was a smell of cheese and beer, rope, yarn, oakum, sailcloth, and half a hundred other articles. Mr. Horrell greeted us in friendly fashion.

"'Tis good to see you, Cousin," said he. "It must be five years since last we met, at Exeter market, was it not? So this is Jonathan. A fine, strapping lad. Come up to the house for supper. I can give 'ee a bed. Ye'll lie two to a bed? 'Tis a good broad one, and hath rested many in its time."

In spite of this show of heartiness my heart sank a little, for I feared that I should not like Mr. Horrell. His face was pitted with the smallpox, as mine was years afterwards. He could not help that, but it gave him a sinister expression. He had lost his teeth, his mouth was set in a hard line, he had little greedy eyes. My father laughed and jested his way through the evening, but next morning he was more serious than I had ever seen him.

"Put your trust in the Lord, as your mother saith," were his last words, "but keep a light and merry heart. Be loyal and loving to your comrades, and you'll not lack friends in your time of need. And always wear a morsel of iron for luck and to ward off the evil eye."

I think that my father loved me in his careless manner, God rest him. We kissed and parted. I know I was near to weeping. He did not set eyes on his boy again. When next he saw me I was a grown man, with many a bitter memory.

I will not weary you with a long discourse on my life in Plymouth. You are eager to go with me to the Spanish Main, and to hear tales of half-forgotten fights. So be it. Enough to say that after all I found a merchant's life a dull one. I was poring over ledgers, and issuing victuals to ships sailing for the Middle Sea, to Patras and Aleppo, Tripoli and Algiers, and even so far as Cape Verde and the Guinea Coast. The names inflamed my mind, and when I had gotten my receipts for stores and it was time to go ashore, I often wanted to stay with the rough hearty sailors, with their rolling gait, their strange talk and stranger oaths. My heart was with them, as they tramped singing round the capstans, and I heard the shouted order: "Hoist mains'! *Yo ho, hoist!*" or as they cast off from the bollards on the quay, taking the hawsers inboard hand over hand, amid the melancholy crying of the gulls.

In Horrell's warehouse there was much petty cheating. At first I was puzzled, and spoke to my master.

"A mistake here, sir. This is small beer going aboard the *Black Leopard*. Strong beer was ordered, sampled, and paid for."

"Oh no, Jonathan. Oh no, no, no. We do not make aught of a little *mistake* like that. What does it matter? The crew may never come back, sunk by the perils of the sea, by pirates, or by Barbary corsairs. Then, who is there to care? If they do return, months or years afterwards, their grumbles about bad beer or victual are forgotten when the bells ring for a safe homecoming." But it went

against my stomach so to cheat brave simple men.

One day I met someone on the quay who was to overturn my life. I had just been rowed ashore from the *Esther* of Lyme, which was bound for Brest and Bordeaux, when I caught sight of a sturdy, stocky man, who had not so far to sit down as most folks. He was young, in the twenties still (so I thought), but his face was strong and his mouth firm. In his blue eyes was the far-looking gaze of the seaman. Merriment lurked in the corners of his countenance, but a quick, fierce, and passing choler, and withal a passionate earnestness of purpose, were to be read there. His beard was very short and trim, his yellow hair curly. On his head was a steel morion; he carried a sword, and wore a buff leather jerkin. He was deep in conversation with another man, tall and sinewy, who looked down at the little officer, but was certainly treating him with deference.

"You cannot have less than a score of barrels, sir," said the tall man, "even for a small ship like the *Judith*."

"Small be damned," the little man burst in.

"Your pardon, sir," went on the other. "We are bound to be many a month at sea. It may well be that some powder will be spent against the negroes, and though for the rest it is to be a peaceful cruise, I wouldn't trust they Spaniards, not an inch, I wouldn't. They'm a treacherous lot. Then ye may have to fight for your water against the Indians or the negroes, and to shoot fowl for the pot."

"No, Sam," returned the short man, "I haven't the space. We've to keep the hold clear for the black

trade Mr. Hawkins is to collect. I know him, he'll pack them too tight any road. Ye'll have to make do with a dozen. Have ye plenty of match? But what's this, who's this, eh?"

Attracted, as I always was at this time, by sailors' talk, I had, without knowing I was so doing, approached nearer. The shorter of the two men rose up from the bollard on which he had-been sitting, and looked me over, up and down.

"A likely lad for you, Sam," he said. "Sink me if he is not. We cannot ship a gunner's mate for you in the *Judith*, but we could give you a good boy to train. What do you say, lad? How would you like to sail to Guinea and the Spanish Main with me? Mr. Cornish here will make a gunner of you, sure enough. If this wind holds, we sail on Wednesday with Mr. John Hawkins' venture. No fighting, just business, but you never know, you may have a smack at the Dons yet. They think that all the seas belong to them, given and bequeathed by His Holiness the Pope." He spat. "One day we will show them, by Heaven. But how say you? Good pay, see the round world, and take a share in the profits of the cruise. Fireflies in the cane-brakes, humming-birds so big as a thimble, fish that fly, palms and white sand and sunshine. Red coral reefs, blue blue sea, and white surf breaking. Great flashing swinging stars, with your wake all white flame, the night more lovely than the day. O all ye works of the Lord! They that go down to the sea in ships, these men see the wonders of the Lord. Aye, the wonders of God!"

This speech, delivered in a masterful, compelling fashion; with a fire in the eyes that held you breathless, swept a youngster like me off his feet. I stammered something about being bound apprentice, but the little man did not hear or heed. "Come along, my young cockerel, sail the seas with Francis Drake, in the *Judith*, fifty tons, and a tidy smart craft. Southward ho! for the Line on Wednesday's tide, if the Lord'll keep the wind in this-yer quarter. Here's your imprest shilling. You'll be there."

The two moved off, the taller talking earnestly with a backward look at me as I stood by the quay on that late September morning, staring at the imprest money lying in my hand, and committed to an adventure, longed for indeed, but yet undreamt of a few minutes before. Of course I knew all about Mr. Hawkins enterprise. We made it our business to know. He was sailing with two Queen's ships, the *Jesus of Lubeck*, 700 tons, a great ship bought from the Hansa merchants by King Henry, years and years ago; and the *Minion*, a smaller vessel of 250 tons, also of a good age. They had been reconditioned and refitted in the Plymouth yards, but the longshoremen were wagging their beards. They said that the vessels would prove leaky and none too seaworthy in a gale of wind.

Mr. Hawkins was bound for the coast of Africa to get negroes for sale to the Spanish plantations in the Indies. The Spaniards had used up the supply of native Indians in the mines and estates. The Indians were not good workers, but the negroes were so. There was therefore a brisk demand for

black slaves. The Spaniards would take all we could bring, as Mr. Hawkins had found out on his earlier voyages. However, the King of Spain had strictly forbidden his people in the Indies to trade with English or French or indeed any but Spanish men and Portugals.

Mr. Hawkins was the leading citizen of Plymouth town, and every one knew that he was determined to do his business with the plantations and mines, whether it were forbidden or not.

Most folks in the town knew Francis Drake—a marked man even then, by reason of his vigour, self-will, and skill as a seaman and navigator. Men said he was some sort of a cousin to the Hawkins brothers, William and John. His father, so I have heard, came out of Tavistock, up over the moor from Plymouth. The relation, if there were any, may have been through his mother. Mr. Hawkins had an eye to a good sailorman, and when Francis Drake came to Plymouth from plying up and down the Narrow Seas to the Netherlands, the two brothers gave him employment. He had already been to the Main once before (or was it twice?) in his own little bark, the *Swan*. I never heard the rights of it, but he had had a quarrel with the Governor of Rio de la Hacha, and was thereafter very bitter in his talk against the Spaniards. And now he was going with the venture in the *Judith*, and it seemed that I was going with him. Had I not taken the imprest money? Yet I would not be a mere runaway from my master. What to do? I would go to Mr. Hawkins and ask him to speak unto Mr. Hornell and have my inden-



tures cancelled. He was one of the justices and could do so if he would. I had often spoken with him in the way of trade, though it was not likely that he would take much note of me, a humble apprentice.

So I betook myself to his house, where the servant recognised me as from Mr. Horrell, and in due time I was led to his room. I saw a bluff, hearty-looking man seated at a table, with a high-crowned hat on his head, and a starched ruff that seemed to imprison his neck. As I entered, he was saying to two men with the touch of the sea upon them, masters of his ships, I thought:

"Five hundred be a proper cargo, but us a lot to come by quickly. Can we victual and water so many? Well, my boy" (turning to me), "you'm come from Mr. Horrell. What does he want with me?"

"He wanteth naught, sir. 'Tis I, Jonathan Heard, who am wishful of a word with you. Sir, you be justice on the peace in this town; will you help me to break my indenture of apprentice to Mr. Horrell?"

"For why, boy; for why?"

"Sir, I have taken imprest money from Captain Drake to sail in the *Judith*. He saith he will make a gunner of me."

"May the Lord love ee, lad, of course I will. A gunner, hey? We need gunners. Most o' they that draw gunner's pay shoot into the sea or spend their shot in the face of God's heaven. 'Tis a serious matter, breaking an apprenticeship, but I'll set ye free. Where is your father, and what will he say?"

"Over to Topsham, and I'm not asking him."

Captain Hawkins laughed and shook his head, but the ships would be ready for sea on Wednesday, and my master, Mr. Horrell, would do anything for a Hawkins. So I, self-willed and thoughtless, was freed, and my father had to pay for it. On Tuesday night I went aboard the *Judith*. The wind had backed a point or two, but still held good. With the *Jesus* as admiral, and the *Minion*, and with three other smallish ships whose names I have at this moment forgotten, we weighed anchor. We hoisted sail and glided past the Hoe, amid the cheers of all Plymouth there assembled, our trumpets blaring and our drums beating. We lined the bulwarks and clung to the shrouds, waving our farewells. The cheers grew fainter, we stood out into the Sound, and in the gathering gloom of evening soon were rising and falling to the long Atlantic swell.

CHAPTER II

BLACK CARGO

My quarters were with Mr. Samuel Cornish, the gunner, in the gun-room, below the poop and the captain's cabin. Mr. Cornish slept in a little bed, which was recessed in the wall. I took my rest on a hard mattress on the floor, with a thick rug-gown for warmth. Six kegs of powder were ranged round the sides of the gun-room; we had no room for more. The remaining six were stowed away in the after-part of the hold. Supplies of match, flint and steel, cartridge paper, oakum for wads, and the like were also in the gun-room. The first thing the master-gunner did when we were clear of the land was to warn me of the danger of fire. "If you bring a lighted candle in yurr, you young limmer, you'll blow us all to glory. Oh yes, it hath often happened. I mind on Mr. Hawkins' last voyage we saw the *Merlin* of London sink before our eyes. First her whole poop went up with a roar, and three blackened men were flung upwards, and went turning over and over till they sank with a splash in the sea. Many more were crying out in pain from their burns. Suddenly there was another burst of flame and smoke, and the ship slowly heeled over and sank. Yes, she did, sure enough."

I did not forget this alarming story, but I was almost past caring then. The deck planking seemed

to swell up beneath my feet, the line of the sea cank down and down, and tilted. Up it heaved again. I staggered to the side. For three days I was a miserable useless wretch, an offence and an annoyance to the master-gunner. Then came some stray gleams of sun, and I began at last to feel hungry. I steered a course for the covered gun-deck, where lay the sailors when their watch was not on duty. A bundle in a corner groaned, and showed a white face. It was a boy about my own age. "Get up," I said, stirring him with my foot and all cock-a-hoop at my own recovery. He retched. "Oh, if I'd ha' known what 'twould be like," he said, "sure enough I'd never have went."

It was still blowing, and indeed I thought the wind was rising. The gun ports were closed, and the guns were run back to their breeching-ropes and lashed. It was dark, and the air was heavy between decks. As I returned to the gun-room there was a gust of rain. It soon settled down to dirty weather. Captain Hawkins, as general, had set out a code of signals with lights and flags, and had given the island of Tenerife as a meeting-place if the weather was so rough that the smaller ships would not be able to keep company with the admiral. We had to try to keep ahead and a-weather of the *Jesus*. Captain Drake read out the orders to the assembled ship's company. I remember they ended: "Serve God daily, love one another, preserve your victuals, beware of fire, and keep station." Frankie Drake always served God daily, reading prayers each day if the weather permitted. 'Tis done even now in all

His Majesty's ships. Did we ever call him Frankie? Not on your life! Not to his face. He had a very proper notion of his position, even then. It was "Captain Drake, sir," you may be sure. Though most of us loved him, no man ever took liberties with him twice. Yet he would haul on a rope like any ordinary seaman.

Day by day the weather grew worse. By the time we were off Cape Finisterre the seas were running high, as if all the tors on old Dartmoor had gotten loose and were advancing to crush us. It grew dark; the gale howled, and snatched and tore at our rigging. We could not stand. We ate sitting on the hatches, our meat in one hand and the pot in the other, drenched with salt spray. Sea-chests slammed to and fro. Mr. Cornish cast anxious eyes at the lashings of his guns. It is an ill-hap if a gun gets loose in a storm. I went to him. He grinned at me. "Was there ever such weather since Adam was a boy?" he cried above the noise of the leaping, battering waves and the shrieking wind. Well, I have seen worse storms since, but this was my first, and bad enough. We were sorely buffeted for four days, and when at last the waves went down, the sky cleared, and the sun shone sparkling on our dripping gear, we were alone. The captain called the mate, the bos'n, the gunner, and the carpenter to his cabin to report damage.

"Well, what news?"

"We've lost a boat, sir, but there's little hurt else, seemingly."

"Powder dry?"

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Wish I could see the *Jesus*. A 'damned leaky great tub she is. I'll set a course for Tenerife."

During these days of fair weather Mr. Cornish gave me my first lessons in gunnery. There were only four light pieces on each broadside, two sakers and two minions. The saker was a 3½-inch bore, and threw a shot of five pounds, and the minion a four-pound shot. Not for us were the culverins and cannons. There were also three little breech-loading guns, two firing through the for'ard bulkhead of the poop, and one through the after bulkhead of the forecastle, to command the waist of the ship, should she be boarded. You never see breech-loaders nowadays, but they were quick to fire. You could loose them off once every two minutes if they did not get too hot. The guns loaded from the muzzle were fired once every five minutes, with a good crew. The breech-loaders were mounted on pivots, not on the usual four-wheeled carriage, and the chambers containing the charge were taken off after firing. To alter the elevation of the muzzle-loading gun, you lifted the piece on the carriage with a crowbar, and put thereunder or took therefrom a wooden wedge, which we called a quoin.

"Now, young man," said Mr. Cornish, "this is the way to load! First, you run the piece back with these-er ropes. Then you thrust down a cartridge of canvas or strong paper carrying the charge of gunpowder. Like this. A wad of oakum next, then the round-shot, then another wad. All these are truly rammed home. Else, the powder would only burn

and not explode. Next you thrust a piece of wire down the touch-hole to pierce the cartridge, and prime the gun by filling the touch-hole with fine powder from your horn."

I was proud to carry a horn at my belt.

"The gun is then run forward to the port by means of these side-tackles running through the ring-bolts. Forward she goes! You lay your gun. Your match, which you will already have lighted, should be twined round your linstock. You put it to the touch-hole, so! Away flies the shot. Back rushes the gun into the breeching-ropes, and you sponge her through with a mop."

The trade of a gunner doth not change, Dick. You go through the same motions to-day.

The master-gunner told me of the duties of that rank. "I and my mates keep the guns in good order and overlook the crews that work them. I see that the guns are kept loaded and that slow-match and priming are ready, when need is. I must know how to lay and secure my guns, how to make cartridges, aye, and the powder too, if required. Above all things, I must contrive to keep my powder dry, no matter how leaky be the ship, no matter how much sea comes aboard. The shot must be ready in their racks. And remember, young man, the master-gunner is next unto the captain in the direction of a fight."

It seemed to me to be a craft well worth the learning, and I was as diligent as you could expect of a youngster.

After many days we espied that marvellous high,

hill, the peak of Tenerife, hanging in the air like a cloud, fifty miles away. 'Tis so high that snow lies upon it, winter and summer. The islands of the Canaries are sure enough the Fortunate Islands, or as men used to say aforetime, the Islands of the Blest. They have grapes so big as plums, and wine of the very best, as thou knowest, fine sugar, sun-dried raisins, corn and cattle and wild fowl. And I did see there camels also. These creatures are of good understanding, for they kneel to be loaded, but their shape is strange and ungainly. They have backs like unto molehills, great crooked legs with splayed feet, long necks and small heads, and they live on straw and stubble. Here too it was a pretty sight to see flocks of little pale-green birds, with a rolling song, so sweet as boys singing. At these fair islands we found our consorts, and we all took in fresh water.

“Any letters for Old England? Here is the *Judy*, homeward bound!”

Ere long, about the middle part of November, we came to Cape Verde, where we anchored in twelve fathoms. The people here are negroes who go naked, tall and strong for our trade. The general landed one hundred and fifty men, to bring some negroes aboard. None of our crew did go, and we were glad, for they returned with but few negroes, and seven or eight men hurt by arrows. Mr. Hawkins himself was wounded also. Though their wounds were quickly healed, all, save only Mr. Hawkins, died in strange sort. Their mouths were shut fast; we tried to put sticks and stones between

their teeth, but it availed nothing, so that all thought the arrows had been poisoned. Mr. Hawkins had a suspicion of this, and at once drew out the poison from his wound with garlic, as a negro had showed him on his former voyage.

The African folk dwell in stockaded towns and villages of much bigness. Their houses are set in orderly fashion along cross-ways of two main streets. They are made round, of stakes and palm leaves, some sixteen feet high, and the roofs are thatched with palm or reeds. There is a loft in the roof, where they store their victual, and they lie on bedsteads covered with mats. In the town there is a house of meeting, where the chief or king sits. The elders squat on the floor, and they do justice. In the rivers and on the seas they go in canoes digged out from the trunk of a tree. In those seas are monstrous fish that will seize and devour a man, and in the rivers another monster, with a mighty tough hide and very great teeth, of exceeding girth and short legs, a river-horse we called him. Another marvel was the palm-tree, so high as a ship's mainmast. Nuts and wine and oil grew on the top of the same. And there was the plantain, like a fir pole, with leaves large and long, and crooked fruit in clusters, a cubit's length. When ripe they be very good and dainty to eat. But oh, the little flies a-biting! They hurt us sore, and often their stings did swell. I marvel why the good God made such creatures to plague us poor Christian men.

For two months we were up and down the Guinea Coast, from Rio Grande to Sierra Leone. We had

not gotten a hundred and fifty negroes between us, and the voyage looked like being unprofitable. It was then that we had a stroke of good fortune. One of the kings sent a messenger to Mr. Hawkins, desiring his aid against sundry other kings his neighbours, and promising him his fill of the prisoners. Therefore the general that night sent one hundred and twenty men, whereof some were out of the *Judith*, to make an assault on a town. 'Twas said that there were eight thousand people within. It was stoutly fenced, with pointed stakes inclining outwards. Our men ran up to the stockade and tried to force a way through with axe and hatchet. But they could not. They lost many killed and hurt with arrows and were compelled to fall back.

Mr. Hawkins wanted his negroes and was not daunted. He ordered all ships to sail in close to land and bombard the town with fireworks and shot. We did so. I was allowed to put a linstock to a saker, and well remember with what delight I heard the roar of the gun, and saw it recoil on to the breeching. The guns of all the ships flashed and thundered. The fiery messengers sped over the shore to fall within the town. The dry thatch quickly caught fire. I never saw such a sight, nor heard such sounds of terror in all my days—the roaring flame, the fire-spangled smoke, the shouts and shrieks and wailing, the report of arquebus and caliver, and the yells of our sweating men. Captain Hawkins took command of the landing-party, and with flaring torches, pikes, and muskets, burst his way into the town. By the light of the blazing huts he rounded up two or three

hundred men, women, and children, and with a strong guard marched the weeping crowd into the ships. Next morning Mr. Hawkins sought our ally, who had prisoners numbering six hundred, from which he was to take his pick, but that potentate had vanished, with all his braves and his captives.

Mr. Drake looked with some disfavour on the sorry mob of blacks which were led down to the hold under guard. "I know it is good money, Mr. Harper," he said to the mate, "but I wish we had some other sort of trade. I like not the smell of this cargo, and the dirt in my ship will be lamentable. It will take days of hard work to make her sweet again." I was standing just below the poop, and could hear his strong voice uttering his discontent. But there was no help for it. Despite the departure of our ally and the consequent loss of the prisoners, I should guess we had among us more than four hundred negroes, and the captain told us that, at a council held aboard the *Jesus*, it was decided to forsake the coast of Guinea and make for the West Indies. Therefore all ships sent boats inshore with barrels to seek fresh water. When the water had been got aboard, we pushed up the river, and with axes cut a great store of dead wood for fuel to the galley fires. Early one steamy February morning sails were hoisted with a heave and a ho, anchors were weighed with singing. What did we sing? Ah, a merry tune, 'tis. I'll make shift to sing it for 'ee, though my voice is thin and reedy in my old age. Something like this:

*"Walk her round, my bully boys,
Walk her round, with merry noise,
Up she comes, the wind won't stay,
Up she comes, our hook's aweigh!"*

We gave a great shout as the ships gathered way. There arose a long moan and lament from the negroes in the hold as they left behind their country.

A sailor who had been on this coast before in 1564, and had learnt many crafty tricks from the negroes, caught for me a grey parrot just like Polly in her cage yonder. I tethered him with a cord around his leg and clipped his wing pinions, and so he became for me a companion. I laboured to teach him to say "Kiss me, darling," or some such foolishness, and since the sailor sweareth terribly in his talk, I fear me he learnt many worse things. It was joyous to hear him scold the ship's cat. I wished for a monkey also, but thought he might pull the scarlet tail-feathers of my bird, as the mate's monkey tried to do. In those dark forests the monkeys do be so common as finches in England, screeching and chattering and bounding and crashing through the green gloom.

For nigh on seven weeks we dipped and rolled our way across the great wide ocean, with no sight of land, and oft with contrary winds, or no winds at all. Day after day the leaping sun rose behind us, blazed in his zenith, and sank glowing in the west. As the weeks passed, our longing eyes stared into the sundown for sight of the islands of which we

dreamed. The water supply was getting low and beginning to turn green and stink, and we had very many thirsty mouths to assuage. Captain Drake fretted and swore with impatience at the long voyage. He hated such cargo in his ship. "We'll sell this lot," I heard him say, "and then no more heathen cargoes for me. They'll be made into Christians, if so be you can call Papists Christians. Mayhap by God's mercy their souls will be saved, but God pity their bodies." Frankie Drake was more tender-hearted than most, save when his anger got the better of him. He was a very Protestant sort of man, a realot for the reformed religion. He had with him a book by one Foxe, a parson back along in Old England, which he esteemed next to his Bible, and from which he sometimes used to read to us at prayers. If I remember right, it was about the burnings in Mary's reign, when I was a little tacker. There was a burning in those days by Heavitree, without Exeter wall, so they tell me. Many Topsham folk went in to see it, but I were too young to walk so far.

"Land ho!" cried the look-out man in the foretop at last. Men cheered, and there was a buzz of happy talk and laughter. Our anchors splashed into the sea when we came to the island, which was called, I think, Dominica. It was even as the captain had promised me, sand and surf and palm-trees, blue sea and green brakes. There was a fresh spring of fair sweet water, wherein we washed and refilled our casks, and we cut wood for our fuel. We tarried not there, but made for the island of Margarita. We

anchored, and parties rowed ashore. We were met by some Spanish gentlemen, who received us courteously; and not without some misgiving, owing to the rules against trade with foreigners; they took a few of our negroes in exchange for fresh victuals.

One warm starlit night some of us rowed out, our oars dripping as it were with flame, to a great rock about a mile off the island. As we approached, a vast number of geese rose crying into the air. "Just like our barnacle geese at home," said one of us. Quoth another, "And this-yer rock be like the Mewstone east of Plymouth, with geese instead of seamews breeding!" We landed on the rock and scrambled about it. Happy and excited were we. *Ay de mi!* 'Twas well for us we knew not what Fate would bring. We knocked over many of the birds with sticks, bringing them aboard with their eggs, which be so big as turkeys' eggs, and speckled. Very good meat they were.

It was in Margarita that I first saw the Indians' tobacco. They used to dry the leaf in the sun, pack it into an earthen cup on a long hollow cane, set fire to it, and suck the smoke through the cane. These Indians were of an olive-tawny complexion, with hair all black, and they went naked save for a little cloth before and behind. They brought us hens, potatoes, and pineapples, for which we paid with beads and knives. Thou hast seen the potato, Dick. It is a most delicate root, and far exceedeth our parsnips and carrots. Sir Walter Raleigh gave some to Sir Richard Hawkins, over to Slapton, but they were the Virginian sort, not so

sweet as those of which I speak. The Indians make their bread from a corn called maize. The ear is a span long, with grains so big as a pea. What I marvelled at most, however, was their making of fire by twirling between their hands a stick which had been put into a hole in another flat stick.

Margarita is but a few leagues from the mainland, whither we came to a place called Burburoatoa, or some such name. We moored our ships alongside a little jetty. For the space of two months we did a fair trade in negroes with the Spaniards, the while we trimmed and scraped our hulls. From thence we moved westward along the coast to an island named Curaçao. Here Frankie Drake went to Mr. Hawkins, and asked leave to push on to Rio de la Hacha, where the pearl fisheries are. "For," he told us, "I know the Governor of that place, a plaguey, stiff-necked, obstinate sort of fellow. I've a private quarrel with him already. With this prohibition he will not willingly trade. I should take delight in forcing him." So we in the *Judith*, with another bark called I think the *Angel* as consort, ran on ahead to Hacha.

We anchored before the town. So far from being permitted to trade, or even to water, we espied breastworks erected at all points of entry, and hardly had our anchors taken the mud when a puff of smoke came from the shore, and the boom of a discharge. A cannonball came hopping across the water, sending up clouds of spray as it struck the crests of the waves. Again and yet again they fired, the third shot passing between our two ships. The captain ran down the companion to the gun-deck,

where the crews waited beside the guns. "Mr. Cornish, loose off a saker shot at yon white house. 'Tis the Governor's, and see you hit it."

The rammer prised up the gun with a crowbar. Mr. Cornish slipped in a quoin. He thrust the linstock into my hand. "Wait till she lifts," said he. "Fire when I say *Now*." Slowly the muzzle rose with the gentle motion of the ship, the gunner's keen eye looking along the barrel. "*Now!*" he cried, and leapt clear. I slammed the linstock on to the priming at the touch-hole. A fizzle, a roar, and a clatter. We peered eagerly through the port. As the smoke curled away, we saw a cloud of dust in front of the house, and a black hole in the wall. "Famous shooting," shouted Frankie. "Give him a hother, lads!" This time we shot out a piece of the corner of the house, as if a giant had taken a bite therefrom. Then behind the breastworks we saw the steel caps of a company of arquebusiers, to the number of about a hundred. They were more than we could tackle with our few men. We weighed, and anchored again out of range, where we rode for a few days until Captain Hawkins the general came up with his great ships.

It was plain to us all that the Governor intended to keep us without water and victual, and so force us to land our negroes. He could then take them for nothing, to our loss and discomfiture. Our general tried again to parley, but the Governor would by no means agree to any trade. The general would not be denied, for the Spaniards (we knew) desired our goods, and we were forced to be rid of the same, the negroes being alive and like to die without water.

He ordered an assault by two hundred men, of which twenty-five were from the *Judith*. Mr. Cornish and I stood by our guns, and watched a wave of arquebus-men and a wave of pike-men advance against the breastworks. When they were yet some way off the Spaniards fired their volley, but fearfully and with bad aim, for only two of our men dropped. We did not discover whether these brave arquebusiers were Spanish or Indian (as some thought), for seeing our determined array, they waited not, but incontinently fled, so suffering no loss at all. Our men, weary, sweating, and suffering terribly from the heat of the sun, clambered slowly over the breastworks, and so entered the town. The Spaniards wanted the black trade, sure enough. Many of their merchants and planters came to us by night, and bought from us to the number of two hundred. All but two men, who were sickly, were sold from the *Judith's* cargo, whereof our captain rejoiced greatly.

In the river of Hacha we in the *Judith* did capture a monstrous great alagato or crocodile. Seven of us went in a pinnace up the river carrying a dead dog. To him we bound a huge hook of steel, the point thereof coming over his back; we fastened a fathom of chain to the hook, and to the chain a rope. We put the dog overboard, paying out our rope hand over hand as we rowed away. With a swirl and a snap the monster swallowed the dog. We rowed the harder. He lashed the water with his tail and plunged in his fury and his agony till he died. We leapt on shore and hauled him to land. He did

measure twenty-three feet in length. He had scales upon his back so big as saucers, and four short crooked legs, with claws like unto a dragon. We opened him, took out his guts, flayed him, and dried his skin in the sun. Afterwards we stuffed him with straw and brought him home. The mate had him.

Still pushing on up the coast of the Main we came to Cartagena, the last port at which we expected to call, since the most part of our negroes were sold. Cartagena was a sizable sort of a place, nigh so big as Plymouth, with many good houses of wealthy folk. The Governor, here also, in obedience to his orders from the King of Spain, would suffer no man to trade with us. Our business was so nearly finished that it seemed our general would not venture any landing, nor spend more time upon that coast. It was now nearly the end of July; and the season of great storms, which the Spaniards call *huricanos*, was at hand. Before leaving we all landed on an island, to exercise our limbs. There in a cave we found some *botijos* of wine, which we took away. In payment Captain Hawkins commanded to be left on the shore some woollen and linen cloth, to the value thereof, and then we sailed away, north-westwards across the blue Caribbean Sea.

Three weeks later the storm broke. We were off the west end of the long island of Cuba, when the sky grew black, and there was a hush, which frightened me and made my heart beat faster. On a sudden the wind came up, and with a raging sea smote us with its fiery blasts, "like the breath of

hell," said one. We could not stand against the full force of it, and were forced to cower in the lee of the bulwarks as we scudded under bare poles. For the space of four days it blew, and as it abated we could see that the *Jesus* had made very heavy weather of it. "I wouldn't be in her," said our captain, as he watched her wallowing in the seas. "So leaky as a sieve, I'll be bound, and look, they'm cutting away all their top-hamper. She doth not seem to be answering her helm proper. Maybe her rudder's loose."

The fleet sought refuge on the coast of Florida, but could find no safe anchorage. In the end we set a westerly course, and came unto San Juan d'Ullua, the port of the City of Mexico, or New Spain, as they call it, about the middle of September 1568. I remember well the season, Dick, for what took place here I can never forget.

We sailed into the harbour with our ensigns hauled down. The shore battery fired a salute, and a boat put off to the *Jesus* carrying the port authorities. It was clear that they thought us to be Spaniards, and indeed we quickly learnt that a fleet from Spain was daily expected. We were near enough to the admiral* to witness the alarm and dismay on the faces of the Spaniards when they thought they had been trapped. However, the general soothed them. Mr. Hawkins found himself in possession of the port, and no fewer than twelve ships, in which 'twas said there was two hundred

* In Elizabethan days the word "admiral" often referred to the ship in which the "general" hoisted his flag

thousand pounds' worth of gold and silver. We would not touch one groat of this, for all we wanted was to refit, revictual, and go upon our lawful occasions.

The harbour of San Juan d'Ullua is very small. The roadstead lieth between the mainland and a little stony island nowhere more than three feet above the water. This small spit of land is but a bowshot long and is two bowshots from the main. Mr. Cornish said to me, "Not in all that coast is there any other place where ships can lie in safety. And even within the roads the northerly winds blow so hard that the ships must be very safely held with their anchors grappled upon the island. Try to ride outside in a northerly gale! The ships would be cast away, sure enough."

On the island was a battery of eleven pieces of brass ordnance. We took possession of it in case of trouble, and provided sentries and crews for the guns under the gunner's mate of the *Jesus*. The very next morning a Spanish fleet of thirteen great ships appeared off the mouth of the haven. The general set out a flag for a council. When Captain Drake returned he told our officers what had happened there, and I begged Mr. Cornish to tell me.

"Well, the general knew not what to do. He was in possession, and could easily keep out the Spaniards, if he so wished. But at any moment it might blow up for a gale, and then the whole fleet would be wrecked. That would be a heavy loss to the King of Spain, who would ask for restitution, and the Queen's Majesty would be terrible angry.

Suppose he lets them in, all the ships'll be crammed up together. Then if they Spanishers turn treacherous, us'll be undone. They be so full of deceit as a cat is of hairs. I knows un."

"What will the general do?"

"Let them in. There is some great Don in the fleet, who says he is the new Viceroy. Captain Hawkins will parley with him."

And so he did for two whole days. On a Monday afternoon, I remember, a trumpet sounded in the Spanish fleet, and then another in the *Jesus*. It was read out in all our ships that we were permitted to trade for victuals, that we were to occupy the island, and no armed Spaniard was to set foot thereon. Further, that English and Spanish were to live in amity, the English ships moored by themselves, as also the Spanish ships in company with each other. That night the Don's fleet entered the haven. We saw the flash of their guns in the darkness, and as the echo of their noise died away, we returned the salute by shooting off our pieces, as the custom of the sea doth require.

It was on the following Thursday morning that Captain Drake, who was looking earnestly towards the mainland, called out for the mate and Mr. Cornish.

"There seems much ado on shore, my masters. What meaneth all those men marching? Something's afoot. And surely they are training guns in those three ships on to our men on the island."

"Treacherous dogs they be, sir," growled the gunner. "They're shifting a demi-culverin from that ship

with the sun's device on her sails to the ~~one~~ along-side, look-so. Do 'ee see the tackle? There 'er goes."

I had been staring at a great ship of perhaps nine hundred tons, called the *Sant' Iago de Compostella*, or some such fancy, moored alongside the *Minion*. I caught again and again the glint and flicker of sun on steel. There were armed men aboard, in great number. I was sure of it. I ran up to the captain.

"Sir!" said I. "Do 'ee see in that great hulk, the *Sant' Iago*, near to the *Minion*, the flash of the sun on helmet and pike? There's something afoot there, sure enough."

"You're a yare lad, Heard. Bos'n, pipe away a boat. Tumble in, Heard, and warn the *Minion's* master, and tell the general in the *Jesus* what us've seen."

The morning was still and very hot. The sea was like to glass, winking almost unbearably in the sun. The rattle of the oars in the rowlocks and the *lip-lip-lip* of the water were the only sounds. There was an air of mystery, of stealth. Full of excitement, I gently raised my voice. "*Minion* ahoy!" The officer of the watch flung me a rope ladder. "I know what you've come for," he said. "We've seen it. The *Sant' Iago's* full of men. We are standing by to get clear, but half our men are ashore. I'll tell the master you came. From Captain Drake? Right. Go you to the *Jesus*." I did so. Captain Hawkins, too, had seen the movement on shore, and had marked the training of the ordnance. "Mr. Barrett," he said quietly to the master, "you have the Spanish lingo. Go to Don Martin, and demand from him an explanation in the

name of the Queen's Majesty. I believe the swab's a traitor." Back I went to the *Judith*. Mr. Cornish and I primed our guns and lighted our matches. All the men were standing by. We cast loose from the shore and stole away.

Suddenly from the town came the high, piercing call of a trumpet. The Spanish ships moored by the island vomited armed men. They ran down gang-planks, jumped on to the stones, slid down ropes. With a shout they fell upon our sentries and those that had been left to man the big brass guns. Taken utterly by surprise, our men broke and fled. A few swam out to the *Jesus*, but all the rest were cut down and slain before our eyes. We could not fire into the throng, but when the victorious Spaniards drew off from the fallen Englishmen, we discharged our calivers. Alas, we were out of range. Frankie Drake stamped and swore. "God's life!" he cried. "The traitorous, devilish villains!"

We turned away from this horrid sight only to see hundreds of men swarming into the *Minion*. Right gallantly did the *Minion's* men defend themselves, first with fire from poop and forecastle, then with push of pike. The master, forewarned, had already loosed his headfasts, and by hauling on his stern fasts, got himself clear, standing out in the middle of the channel. 'Twas a pretty old mix-up, sure enough. The *Jesus* was attacked, and there followed a fierce hand-to-hand fight in the waist of the ship. We had much ado to look after ourselves, and the next thing we heard was a cracked and broken cheer from the *Jesus* as the last Spaniard was flung over-

board. The general cut his headfasts and got out by his sternfasts.

Had not our little captain cast loose when he did, it would have gone hard with us in the *Judith*. We were the only one of the small ships that escaped. The *Angel* and all the rest were sunk by the battery on the island. The three ships that were left were now out in the channel, and it was the turn of us gunners. The *Jesus* and the *Minion* were about two ships' length from the Spaniards, and they fought their guns right well. There was no room to handle the ships in proper fashion, and we had to lay and fire where we could. We had fired one gun, and had passed on to the next while it was being reloaded, when a round shot burst through the port, split the gun, and took off the head of the rammer. A horrid sight.

The heat and the smoke were stifling, our throats were dry as kilns. One man, then another, and another were mangled by shot which crashed through the side, or were grievously wounded by the whirling splinters. Happily for us, the shore batteries were chiefly engaged with the big ships. The *Jesus* and the *Minion* were well armed with many heavy pieces, and they left their mark on the Dons. I think it was the *Jesus* that loosed off a lucky shot at the Spanish vice-admiral. She blew up with a shattering roar and a great cloud of smoke. The most part of her crew of three hundred were spoiled and flung overboard. The remains of her took fire. Another big Spanisher was fired and blazed furiously for half an hour. I believe yet one more was

sunk. But the *Jesus* lost her foremast and her mainmast by the board, as we could well see, and was holed everywhere by great shot. To safeguard the *Minion's* masts, the general ordered her to be brought under the lee of the ruined *Jesus*. By this means she would be protected from the fire of the battery during the night. A boat brought us orders to lay aboard the *Minion* and take some men out of her, which we did, and so made for the harbour mouth, while the sun sank behind the land. As we went, we saw a sudden glare behind us. The Spaniards had sent two fireships down with the wind to our two stricken ships. We hove to, till we saw the *Minion* following. She left the *Jesus* afire.

The wind was blowing northerly, which direction was most dangerous for us, and we greatly feared to be cast away on a lee shore. But the Lord would not have it so, and we escaped, praising His name. The captain did not dare to wait outside for the *Minion*, and in the night we lost her. No meeting-place had been appointed, and Captain Drake decided to sail for England. The greater part of the money we had received for our negroes lay in the burning *Jesus of Lubeck*. Frankie raged furiously, and swore to have vengeance on the Spaniards for their treachery. "I will repay myself tenfold at the charges of those murderous villains," he said more than once to the mate and Mr. Cornish. "If ever I meet Don Martin Enriquez I will show him how the word of a gentleman should be kept."

We had a terrible voyage home. With contrary winds we wandered in an unknown sea for day after

day, week after week. We had little water, and that addle-gutted, all stinking and green. The beer had long since been consumed. It was not until the middle of October that we got fresh water on some coast forsaken by God and man, and by then our victuals were getting low. Our two negroes died, and were put overside. Many men were sick. Three weeks later we cleared the Cape of Florida, and were fairly on our way home, if we were not soon to die of famine. We ate rats, and gnawed hides. The ship's cat, the mate's monkey, and my parrot all went to the pot. In November (God be praised) we saw land like a blue cloud on the horizon. Land at last. "That'll be the islands of the Bermudas, lads," said the captain. "Fresh water, cool fruits for the scurvy, food and rest and refreshment for you all." A cheer arose from our half-starved band. The sun went down, and the moon and the stars came out over the sea, as we ran on. The wooded hills were sleeping under the moon, with a thousand thousand fireflies lighting their slumber. We found an anchorage with the grey of dawning, and the sun rushed upwards into the sky as our anchor took hold.

We lay there thanking God who had brought us out of the perils of our enemies and the sea unto Paradise. Boat-loads of eager men passed through the foaming coral reefs, and sought the shade of the palms. We clambered about on shore filling our mouths with grapes from the creeping vine, and wandering in the woods to seek and find even more delicious fruits. We killed a store of fowl and conies,

and took many very great tortoises, whose backs and bellies were all sheathed with bone. Their flesh did eat like veal, and their eggs very sweet also. We revictualled our ship as best we might. We abode in that fortunate island for a week or more, as our sick grew stronger and joined in our bootless search for gold and silver up and down the island hills.

Early one morning the shivering sails were hoisted, and with a fair wind we reached Terceira in the Azores after many days. Here with our last store of money we bought food from the Portugals, took in water, and set sail for home. Except for a rough sea in the Bay, the Lord sent us fair weather. The good sou'-wester, the home wind, still held as we ran before it up the Cornish coast. We rounded Rame Head and swept into Cawsand Bay. The cable rattled through the hawse-hole as our anchor took English ground.

My pipe, he've gone out. Dick, boy, us must go aloft. Sling our hamacoes, eh? Thou hast never been to London, nor perhaps never will. To-morrow I'll tell 'ee how I rode thither with Francis Drake, and how I lost him, to my great sorrow, for many a long year. God be with 'ee. Good night.

CHAPTER III

LONDON

YES, I'd come back from my first voyage, and I was penniless as when I began it. If such were seafaring luck, I was almost better ashore. I abode in the *Judith*, and so did most of us, for indeed there was no money to pay off the crew until the captain had been to see Mr. John's brother, Mr. William. He went off in haste, and returned with the necessary moneys to the Pool, whither the mate brought the ship the next day. All the men, hale or sick, were wild to go ashore on being paid off. Captain Drake had always liked Mr. Cornish for a knowledgeable man, and bided awhile to talk with him before they parted.

"Mark you me," said the little captain, "henceforth the Spaniards are my enemies. They've robbed us all treacherously and slain many good Englishmen. I have vowed and sworn to repay myself. By the life of God, I'll have some of that gold the King of Spain bringeth home to trouble the earth withal. If I cannot get a privateer's licence, I'll go without. I know well whence it comes, and where it is put on shipboard for Spain. Wilt go with me, Sam?"

"Aye, aye, sir, that will I. Us'll have no more trade with they Spanishers. but'll give 'n some warmer entertainment."

"And your boy, too, perhaps. He be grown

almost a man. Mr. William hath given me strait orders to ride at once up to London, to the Privy Council, and tell them all. They'll mislike our losing the Queen's ships. Mr. John is not yet home. God send him safe. The Queen's Majesty will fume with rage, and so also will the fine gentlemen who had shares in the voyage. But see the humour of it, Sam. It is the talk of the town that at the tail end of the year a squadron of French Protestant privateers (or maybe pirates) chased five galleons of Spain into Plymouth Sound. Now those galleons had in their bellies a mighty store of gold bound for the Scheldt to pay Alva's soldiers, who are trying to hold down the valiant men of the Low Countries. What did our good sheriff do but put the gold for safe keeping into Saltash Castle, and send a letter to the Queen. The Queen (God bless her) had it brought to London for yet safer custody, and there it lieth in the Tower. Alva hath not seen the colour of his money, and, please God, now he never will. But that closeth not my private account with the Spanish power, nor with Don Martin, Enriquez. May his master the Devil fly away with him to hell!"

I have never been one who hung back when I wanted aught. Many a time have I pushed my nose into trouble thereby, but it is better to make your own course by your own reckoning than to wait upon events and let what will happen unto you. I spoke up now.

"May I come with 'ee, to London, sir? You'm not be wishful to go alone, surely?"

"Why, no, 'tis true, young Heard. We can draw

expenses for two from Mr. Hawkins, look-so. Aye, you can come. See London, hey? 'Tis a brave sight, sure enough. Ye'll need a horse, a cloak, a brace of pistols, and your own sword. Wear your steel cap, we can buy hats to London. Start to-morrow. Nick Long of Mutley'll be a match for these-ye cozening horse-dealers. We'll seek 'un now. God be with 'ee, Cornish."

Captain Drake, strong, purposeful, quick, stepped out over the cobblestones. He did not come much above my shoulder, for I was about eighteen years old and had grown tall and long-legged, while he were stocky. Years later, the Queen used to call him her little pirate, which did vex him mightily, or her little admiral, when she ceased from teasing him. We reached the farthest houses of the town, and halted at a tavern in Mutley. Captain Drake stepped in and called for Nick Long. A loose-limbed, beardless, thin-faced man of about forty took a straw from his mouth and came forward with a slow smile.

"Why, Captain Drake! Glad indeed you'm back along home. I heard of 'ee yesterday. How be getting on?"

"Aw, not so bad. Still living in and out of ship-board, and how be you? They rascally Spaniards spoiled our voyage, blast them," Captain Drake went on, "and I and this young cock be off to London to-morrow with a letter from Mr. Hawkins to the Queen in Council. Canst get us two horses, Nick? Stout nags, mind, and see we be not cheated of our money. I'll pay ye when I come at noon to-morrow. Have 'em ready with forage bags and all harness."

"You can have horses at daybreak if you wants them. For why do 'ee wait till noon?"

"I've to go to St. Budeaux in the forenoon," said the little captain shortly.

"Aw, and for why be 'ee going to St. Budeaux, I wonder?" said Long with a smile and a wink at me. I stared frankly, and Frankie said naught but a farewell which was something sudden. Before dark we bought in Plymouth horse-pistols and loaded them, and long cloaks to keep out the mud and the rain, for seventy-odd leagues in winter was no light matter. I looked upon it as an adventure like a new voyage, which indeed it was. I lay that night in a tavern near the church, and armed and spurred and cloaked, with long boots well waxed, I met my captain at Nick Long's. I was there first, and over a tankard of beer Long told me that men said Captain Drake was courting Mistress Mary Newman over to St. Budeaux.

"Aye, and mighty secret he be, sure enough," said Nick. "If the fond wench marry him, her'll be a widow three parts of her time, for there be no woman born that'll keep Frankie Drake long away from blue water. I have his cloak and pistols here, and the horses are ready. Yurr he cometh."

"What-ho! Nick!" hailed a strong voice from outside, and the little captain strode in, stamping his feet, for the day was cold.

"So you'm here, Jonathan. What do I owe you, Nick? Let's see the horses. We'll not get to Ashburton to-night. The road be so bad, they tell me,

that it's a full 'day's journey this time of year. We must find beds at Ivybridge."

Farewells done and payments made, we mounted and clattered away, the horses' hoofs striking fire from the cobbles and our scabbards clinking against our spurs, more like soldiers than sailormen. The going was good enough through Plympton, but the way narrowed after that, with high banks on either side, sheets of stagnant rain-water, deep sticky mud, and stones and boulders fallen down from the banks. For safety we dismounted.

By the Yealm crossing the way opened out for a space. The little river was in flood, and a-rushing and a-roaring mighty fast. It was February, remember, and the gloomy dusk was falling about us.

"Can't find the ford!" bawled Captain Drake, above the noise of the waters. "Can 'ee get a foothold?"

I splashed up and down on the margin of the stream, stumbling and sliding on the stones.

"Captain! Captain Drake! Here be the causeway, but her's broken down!"

Though bundles of sticks had been thrown in the worst places, they were all but swallowed up. My horse slipped as I tugged at his bridle with my boots in soft mud well over the ankle, and he floundered in to his hocks. I was plastered with mud, and my cloak was heavy with it. The little captain, swearing vigorously as he staggered on, was in even worse case. We made shift to mount before fording the stream, which by good luck we did without further

mishap. It was dark long ere we came to Ivybridge, and we must have missed our way had not the track been again between steep banks. The inn was a poor place, but there was at least a good fire of great sticks, a man to pull off our boots, a rough meal, and home-brewed ale, which might well have been worse.

By eight o'clock next morning we were again on the road, and a very bad road it was. This stage between Plymouth and Aishburton, in truth, was the worst of the whole journey. The Captain knew the towns where there were postmasters and where each stage ended. We were not of course travelling post, but as the post stages lay at about six or seven leagues, which was so far as we could go at this season in one day, we determined to put up our horses and ourselves at the posting inns. We had another splash at Brent, and much dirt by the Dart to Buckfastleigh. The country between this place and Aishburton was mostly open, and we had an hour or more of daylight to come when we rode down the hill past the church into the Bull Ring at the bottom of the town.

It was Saturday afternoon, and there was still one bull left to the baiting. As we neared the press, the bellowing bull was led in by a rope to a ring in his nose. The rope was run through a great old iron ring in the pavement, and with shouts and cries and curses the bull-dogs were set on. One bull-baiting is very much like another, but a custom they have in this town is for the women to stand in the front row of the surrounding onlookers. Each woman wore an

apron, and when a dog was tossed whirling over and over in the air, the women ran forward and caught him in their aprons, and so broke his fall to the hard cobblestones. There is in Aishburton a by-law which saith that every bull before being slaughtered must be baited, for it improveth the savour of the flesh. Or so they told us at the inn. Nowadays they Puritans would stop (if they could) folks' pleasures like bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and play-going, seemingly. 'Tidn' no sense.

I misremember the name of the inn to Aishburton. I think it was in North Street, along which runneth the dirty little Aishbourne stream, full of old crocks and filth. However, 'twas a good inn. Our boots were drawn off and with our cloaks were put to be dried and cleared. After we had taken meat and drink, we sat round a great fire to drink with the worthies of the town. This we did each evening of our journey.

*"Pastime with good company
I love and shall until I die."*

Captain Drake was a good talker, though he would not speak very freely of his mission. It is a-many years ago, and I cannot remember all that was said. Likely enough I would weary you if I could.

I call to mind a clothier, with ruff and gown, in the chimney-corner, drinking Spanish sack. I forget his name, and anyhow 'tis no matter, but like most clothiers in the West Country, he was rich and a warm fellow. Yet he was full of trouble. The farmers

brought the wool to market, he said, sometimes much and sometimes little, and the comber who bought it never knew where he was. Then the combers' task was a dry and thirsty one; they had a hogshead of cider always on tap in their work-rooms, they were drunk most of their time, and sometimes upset their charcoal stoves and set fire to the town. When the wool had been spun into yarn, the weaver bought it, and it went to the looms.

I forget the complaint against the weaver, but there was one, for the clothier bought the cloth from him at the cloth market. While in his hands it went through the fuller's mill and the dyer's vat, and thence to the tailor in London or in Holland or wherever a buyer could be found. "And we cannot find buyers to-day, sure enough. There be Plymouth, Totnes, Aishburton, Buckfastleigh, Exeter, Tiverton, Taunton, Dunster, all the towns of the West, turning wool into yarn and yarn into cloth, and the buyers up to London'll look neither at kersey nor serge nor fine cloth. They be full up with it, they say. And we clothiers grow poorer. Combers, spinsters, and weavers' men lack employment and tramp the roads. Yet all the time there be Christians abroad and heathens and infidels who lack the wherewithal to clothe their nakedness, while the good English cloth, the best in the world, lies unsold in the warehouses. England looks to you seafaring men to find her new markets, to Africa, to far Cathay, or even Japangu. Sirs, I drink to you!" He fixed the captain and me with a glittering eye over his cup.

Whether he expected us in reply to drink prosperity to the wool trade, I know not. Captain Drake had not been listening. He was smiling to himself and his thoughts were far away in St. Budeaux. He rose, lifted his tankard, and said, with a twinkle in his eyes, "Here's to they that us loves, here's to they that loves us, here's to they that loves them, that love they that loves us!" We all drank to that, not knowing just what it might mean, and haply a little fuddled with wine and stale air. Soon after we went aloft to bed.

The next day was Sunday. Captain Drake and I went to morning service in the church. We were fain to rest, for our seats were very sore. We watched the archery practice afterward behind the church, the lads of the town making good shooting at a furlong's range. It was a calm winter's day. The air was plum and soft; proper Devonshire weather. We slung our hook at cocklight the next morning, and took the Exeter road. It lay over open rolling country. Once we had left Aishburton, with its strips of ploughland, there was but little cultivation, save near Chudleigh. There was an occasional poor hut or house, and now and again a lean cow or two or some grunting pigs that scampered away from our passing. Hills lay to our left at first, and ere long we laboured through dense woods, where the mud was deep and soft, and where we often had to gird up our cloaks and lead our horses in the mire well over our ankles. We descended to the valley of the Teign. The causeway over the mud was full of gaps. We stumbled and floundered, but got across, shouting

at our horses, cursing the mud, and at the end of it, singing a psalm :

*"He brought me out of the horrible pit,
Out of the mire and clay,
And set my feet upon a rock,
And ordered my goings."*

There was a farm on the other side of the river, and before making the ascent over Haldon, we asked the farmer for a drink. He gave us large mugs of cider. "There, let that down thee necks," he said, "that'll wash away the dirt and cobwebs." Up over Haldon there was a brave searching rain and mist. We could not see ten paces. The trackway split up and wandered about in all directions. We were lost, sure enough. *Clank-clank, clank-clank* came from out the dank fog to our left. We turned aside to discover what the sound was, and came upon the Haldon gibbet, with the rags and tatters of what was once a man dangling in the chains.

"He've been there a tidy while," said Captain Drake. "A footpad or highwayman, I doubt not."

"Are there many such on this road?" I asked, feeling for my pistols.

"Here and there, of course. But there is a vast deal of idle talk about highwaymen. They're mostly a cowardly lot, and a strong man armed keepeth his goods. God Almighty send this plaguey mist away," shouted the little captain in a sudden rage. "We'll never get to Exeter afore dark. I'd navigate the Ocean Sea a hundred times, rather than this ver road."

"Who's that?" I said.

We heard a quavering song out of the gloom, and straightway appeared a strange figure with a peacock's feather in his hat, scarlet hose, and a doublet of hodden grey just seen beneath a tattered cloak. He carried, slung from his shoulders, a pack which he rested on a stout staff.

"'Tis a Johnny Fortnight, a pedlar! And a queer one he is, sure enough."

"Ah, can he tell us the way? He'm half-seas over, look-so." Indeed, he was a little drunk. His pack was nigh empty, and he had been filling his belly.

"The way to Exon, good sirs? 'Tis so crooked as a dog's hind-leg, but keep going down, adown, along there, and ye'll find a good road soon. Wilt buy a pair of points,* good sir, and you, my captain? Always be prepared. Of what use is a man with his points broke? A very lag-laggard."

We bought a trifle from his yawning pack, went on our way, and struck better going. We came to Exeter bridge, and had to wait while a train of some eight or ten pack-horse teams, perhaps fifty or sixty animals, poured jingling over the bridge, with shouts from the teamsters and cracking of whips. Then, as now, Exeter was a noisome city, whose streets must smell up to heaven's gate. Yet it was near home, and a homely bustling place. We lay at the New Inn. I yearned to go down to Topsham to see my father, mother, brothers, and sister, but Captain Drake would not let me spend a day. "You can bide there for long enough when we pass this way return-

* "Points" kept up a man's breeches.

ing. Only two or three weeks to wait." But as it fell out, I waited three long and weary years.

The town was full, for it was serge-market day. We could not tarry. We took the road to Honiton, and here was a real good gravelly way for mile after mile. From now onward to London we fared better, though some parts were bad enough. As we jogged along, making five or six miles an hour in the best places, Captain Drake kindly asked me questions about my family and native town. I told him of my father and the cider business, of the fishermen and the French trade, and of news that was exciting the town a few months before I left it, of how the Devil himself had been to Topsham. Had not his cloven hoof and marks been seen in the snow? And did not a pinnacle from the church-tower fall down in a great storm a few days after with a strong smell of brimstone, and nearly kill a woman who was walking in the churchyard? You could see the marks of the Evil One's claws deep in the stone. Captain Drake received this gravely, as was fitting, but said, "What'd the Devil be doing to Topsham? I dare swear he's busy enough up to London, or in the Indies, maybe."

'Twas an easy journey to Honiton, save for one very bad fenny patch, and we abode at the posting-house. From thence to the bridge at Axminster was a short stage, though stony and dirty, and up and down hill. The brief days and the swift early darkness made it difficult to miss a stage without overtiring our horses, and we put up at the regular inns at Crewkerne, Sherborne, and Shaftesbury. Near

the former place we were pushed off a causeway, forced to dismount, and with our horses stand nearly knee-deep in mud, while another pack-horse train took the road. Frankie Drake's curses were as loud and as long as those of the teamsters, as they urged their beasts onward. Often the road was but a track-way over grass, with hoof-marks and ruts going in all directions ; and when it failed us our best guides were the church-towers.

Travelling far in winter-time is no easy matter. In summer you have the dust, but you can move fast. We slept soundly enough at most of the inns, though I caught a flea in the bed by moonlight in Salisbury. Every few miles we forded some stream. I forget where it was, and know not whether we were off the road or no, but one day we came to a swollen river with a wooden bridge over. The bridge was so full of holes and rotting planks that we thought it well not to attempt to cross by it. We put our steaming horses to the brink of the flood. They took two careful steps, and then were instantly in deep water. Half-swimming, half-slipping on the stony bed, they nearly threw us off. We clung on with hands and knees, and were mighty thankful to God for His mercy when our tired animals clambered out on the farther shore.

Over the great plain of rolling green hills beyond Salisbury there was a mist of rain. The good God must have led us into Andover. We had been benighted else. Day after day we plodded on to Basingstoke and Hartford bridge, and came at last unto Staines, with but one more stage for London.

This last day's journey was pestered with traffic. All men seemed to be going into London from all sides at once, on horseback, afoot, or in carts. Vast droves of cattle, sheep, pigs, and even geese were being urged along the sloppy highway to be slaughtered for London's food. The dung of their daily passing made the splashings of our horses' hooves more offensive than was their wont. We came very near to London. Away on our right was the abbey church and palace of Westminster. The big bell of the palace clock boomed three times to mark the hour. As we entered the great city the roar of the traffic, the curious shifting crowds, the cries of the shopmen and the street-sellers, the innumerable smells, the high gabled houses and tall church-towers bewildered me till I was so mazed as a sheep. We made our way to the "Rose," near the Holbourne. As the winter evening drew on, a thick, stifling, stinking fog came down, shoking our nostrils and blotting out the town.

Next morning Captain Drake had to buy a suit and a hat fit to appear before the Privy Council and maybe the Queen's Majesty herself, to Greenwich, down the river of Thames. I know not whether he saw the Queen. He was but a simple sea-captain, and no one outside Plymouth knew Francis Drake in those days. Yet I think perhaps he did see her. I went into the City by the New Gate, across an evil-smelling fragment of the Ditch, for to admire the sights and sounds of London. I stayed at a hatter's shop to buy me something in place of

my steel morion, which was unsuitable for the City. The apprentice who served me was friendly, very swift-spoken. The Londoner is very quick to answer; he singeth in his speech through his nose. It is hard to understand him.

"I were told the Devil were busy 'up to London," I said, "but he needs must practise all his arts here, seemingly. There's a church every ten paces"

"Oh yes. More than a hundred parish churches, beside Paul's, and half a score in the suburbs. But no fear, the Devil a'nt dead. You'll find him wide-awake."

I put on my new hat, and steered for the great church of Paul. 'Tis of vast size, much over a furlong in length, and the tower soareth high. In the middle of the churchyard is a pulpit cross of timber mounted upon steps of stone and covered with lead. An elderly merchant standing near saw me gazing and said (for Londoners are very civil), "In yonder cross are sermons preached by learned divines every Sunday in the forenoon." I doffed my hat in thanking him, and said:

"I have seen back home-along a picture of Paul's church which showed a very tall spire on the great tower."

"True, there was one, but about eight years ago on a summer afternoon the spire was fired by lightning. Flames broke forth two or three yards below the cross, and burnt downwards to the stonework and bells. In four hours the steeple and the roofs were all gone. The Queen sent a gift for the speedy repairing thereof, and the roof was quickly done

with timber and lead. But God knoweth why the spire is not built."

Within was a great throng and press of people, gossiping and bargaining and buying wares from portable booths in the nave. In the aisles were broken-down adventurers, and a cutpurse or two, I doubt not, and decayed serving-men waiting to be hired. It was fresher without than within, and I soon forsook Paul's church, and set a course for the West Cheape.

This was a famous street of shops, and I spent one or two hours in it and around it. In a tavern I lay to a cold leg of mutton, with bread, butter, and cheese, and a quart of best ale which cost a penny. As I was finishing the ale, I heard a running and a shouting, and raving my reckoning I flung open the door and came out into a side-street. As I did so, I only just made shift to dodge an unsavoury bucketful of slops emptied with a curse from an upper window. A crowd of young apprentices armed with staves was engaged in combat with another band, crying "A Mercers," or "A Grocers" with many strong oaths, to the discomfiture of passers-by. From the windows streamed bucketfuls of such as would damp and cool their ardour, and we innocent folk were like to take this discharge down our necks.

I could but marvel at the concourse in the streets, drays, carts, and coaches, horsemen and foot-passengers, without end or telling. There was much dung and refuse on the cobblestones, which caused a foul mud. This flew over you when a coachman

lasheth at his horses, or when the heavy dray-horse, with his driver asleep on his box, flappeth his broad hooves in a puddle. The noise of wheels and horses, of bells and voices, ceased not ever. 'Twas like the thunder of surf on a rocky shore. I grew weary of it, went about and made for 'port.

Captain Drake was already at our inn by Holbourne.

"To-morrow I hire a boat to Greenwich," said he, "and tell my tale about they Spanish thieves. What'll you do?"

"I, sir? I go down to Billings Gate, and perhaps Ratcliffe and Lime Hurst, to look at the shipping."

I did so. I walked past Paul's again, and onward to the new Royal Exchange where merchants and bankers meet, along Cornhill to the cage, stocks, and pillory. There was a man in the pillory, held by his neck and wrists, amid a laughing crowd. I asked a man who looked knowledgeable the way to the Bridge. "Well, I'm a stranger here myself," he replied, "but if you turn to the right hand you'll be bound to come to the river." So down Gracious Street I went, and there was London Bridge, a brave sight. Many stone arches with piers span the grey river. The tide rushes through the arches, and breaks over the piers like a waterfall, with a thunderous noise. Beautiful houses, where rich citizens abide, overhang the parapets and line the roadway on both sides. Below the Bridge was Billings Gate, a water-gate with a dock and quays and wharves. Here men were unloading both salt and fresh fish,

oranges, onions, salt, wheat, and rye, out of ships come in from sea. I stood and gazed at the scene—labourers hauling on tackles drawing cases out of the holds, carts lumbering off laden, and barges bumping alongside. When I tired of this, I tacked down to Tower Hill, where are the scaffold and gallows, past the mighty fortress, and a good mile along the highway unto Ratcliffe. Many a ship victuals here, and sails to all the world. One fine tall ship I noticed. As I looked, trying to read her name, a longshoreman spoke to me.

"Aye, she'll be off for the Middle Sea soon as the wind shifts." He looked round, and snuffed the air. "And I shouldn't wonder if we have a change by nightfall."

He waxed talkative and friendly-seeming, and anon, being thirsty, I went with him to a waterside tavern, whence came much noise and singing. I liked not the place overmuch, nor the company, but curiosity and an obstinate habit held me. The room was dark and close. All around were a score of men at least, sitting on benches. Some were lying on the floor. Most were sailors it seemed, by their speech and song, but I was doubtful about some of the faces I saw in the dim light. They seemed evil to me, as if belonging to proper rogues. There were a few coarse-looking women. A party of sailors, three-parts drunk, were singing.

The man from whom I bought the drinks was a powerful ruffian, with a patch over one eye. I tried not to show the money in my purse, but it did not pass unnoticed. After I had drunk my ale, I cast

a stealthy glance at the door. Two or three of the baser sort had moved in front of it. .

My companion took hold of my arm. I stood up and stumbled. The room grew misty and seemed to swim before mine eyes. I think I fell, but in very truth, I remember no more.

CHAPTER IV

GALLEYS

I CAME to myself but slowly. I was lying on hard planking, with my head near a great baulk of timber. Five or six feet overhead was a wooden ceiling. It was dark, with light here and there streaming in like fiery lances through the gloom. There was a ripple, a chuckle, a splash, a creaking, a score of familiar noises, a smell of tar and of brine. My feet rose up in front of me, steadied a moment, then sank again. I was at sea! I closed my eyes; tried to think. It came over me that I had been a crazy fool, that I had lost my little captain, and (I felt within my doublet) my purse and all my money. I was away again on a voyage, the Lord knew whither. My head was aching, and in my wretchedness I groaned. A seaman bore down upon me. "Awake?" said he, not unkindly. "You're to see Mr. Grove, the master."

He led me to the quarter-deck. The bright sun, the sparkling, dazzling sea, and the fresh breeze revived me, and I stood up steadily, but without hat or cap, and feeling very unseamanlike. Along the horizon to starboard glimmered the white cliffs of the Kentish shore. She was running before the wind, a gallant, well-found merchantman by the looks of her, under the flag of Saint George. I thought it was the ship I had seen by the quay over to Ratcliffe. My

spirits rose, and I faced the master. He appeared to be a comely man, with a dark-brown beard and dark eyes, strongly built, of middle height, and, as it fell out, a good seaman and a doughty fighter. He looked sternly upon me.

"I don't know you," he said.

"No, sir."

"You were picked up by my search party, dead drunk, in a low tavern, with four of my men. I doubt not that you were taken by mistake for the fifth."

"Not drunk, sir. Drugged and robbed, I was."

"Well, you should keep better company. Your name?"

"Jonathan Heard, sir."

"West-countryman, eh, from your talk? From Plymouth? What can you do?"

"I'm a gunner's mate, sir."

"Gunner's mate! Mr. Foxe!"

"Aye, aye, sir!" A man ran up the gangway, and saluted. His hair was red as fire, and his face was dotted with innumerable freckles. He stammered a little in his speech.

"Take this young man away," said the master. "Find out what he knoweth of gunnery. If he's of use and is telling the truth, let me know, and we'll rate him as your second mate."

I had stretched the truth somewhat, but Mr. Cornish of the *Judith* had taught me much, and though I say it, I had been an apt pupil. I satisfied Mr. Foxe, master-gunner, without difficulty. He seemed glad to have me. Whether I liked it or not,

here I was, and here was I bound to stay. I would have to make this voyage, and I thought I had better do so as if willing, and with the best grace possible. It was my own fault, and I must abide by it. I might have fared much worse. I deemed myself fortunate to have found a happy ship.

"What ship is this?" I asked the gunner.

"*Th-Th-Three Half Moons*, of London," he replied. "Owner, Mr. Caesar, now aboard, m-m-master, Mr. Grove. B-b-bound for Malaga, and Patras in the Morea, with cloth and general cargo, returning with c-currants, oil, and wine, if the L-Lord wills. We're w-well armed, as you've seen. Last voyage we only missed a patrol of Turkish galleys because the Lord sent a fog in which we slipped away. When the f-fog lifted, the I vanter arose, and we sailed away laughing at them. We're a match for two or three galleys at once. No, we're not at war, but the T-Turks are bloody pirates, and on these Middle Sea voyages we all have to be ready with the powder and the match. Very like we shall have a chance of seeing of what s-stuff you are made. The Turcos are very terrible rogues. At the ports you are lucky if you do not pay the lawful export dues twice over, and you must give presents to the cadis, justices, and such like, or you would never sell or buy. After you have t-traded, their galleys lie in wait for your return. They spoil you of your goods, your money, and your ship, and many a good C-Christian hath gone to be chained to a galley oar."

I own that I thought Mr. Foxe over-gloomy. Seafaring men, like merchants, have always some com-

plaint. We passed the Strait of Gibraltar in safety, where the galleys oft do lie, but the season was too early for them. The great Rock lay like a lion couchant. It hath often seemed to me that whoso holdeth this Rock holdeth the key to the riches of the Inland Sea. England should hold it. We unloaded and loaded again in peace at Malaga, and in due time came to Patras. We took in a hundred bags of currants of the old crop, and I forget how many hogsheads of wine besides, not without exactions from the Turkish robbers.

We had no ill-hap on our return till we neared the Strait. Then towards the dawning of a day the watch sung out, "Light ahead!" We shortened sail and stayed. "Light on the larboard bow!" "Light to starboard!" We could not draw back with the wind nearly astern, and we waited fearfully for what the dawn should show us. The glowing rim of the sun cut the eastern margin of the sea. It shone full on the crescent moon devices of eight Turkish galleys on three sides of us, the beaks of their gilded prows swinging into position to point at our gallant ship. Their for'ard brass cannon winked and flickered in the sun. The armour of their soldiery flashed like a blinding white flame, and the wide Mediterranean lay blue and serene.

It was plain we could not run. We must either yield or fight it out till we were sunk. The merchant, Mr. Cæsar, the owner, climbed to the poop, and addressed the ship's company.

"Men," said he, "show your manhood. Be not faint-hearted at the sight of so many foemen. Our

God knoweth not these infidel rascals. If He be minded to deliver us to our enemies, we must take it patiently. But if it be His pleasure and good will to put forth His mighty hand, why then I say unto you, were your foes ten times as many, they could not withstand you. Remember your forefathers of old, who in direst extremity have valiantly fought victorious when all hope seemed gone. Such is the power of our God that He can give you victory over all your enemies. Kneel," he cried, "kneel before Him and pray for His help." With a clatter of armour and weapons the whole company fell on their knees, and said Our Father. "Sing now," said our worthy owner, and led with a loud voice. We broke after him into the psalm :

*"The Lord he is the trusty shield
That rides upon my arm,
The Lord he is the armour bright
That keepeth me from harm.
Therefore let us draw the sword,
And march to battle for the Lord!"*

Mr. Foxe beckoned to me. "G-gun crews to action stations," he said. "The match was lit half an hour ago. They'll soon be within good range." I ran along priming the pieces of cannon, and then, coming down from the gun-room with a boy carrying armfuls of cartridges, I saw a brave and valiant sight. There was Mr. Grove, the master, on the poop with his target on his arm, shaking his sword at the oncoming galleys. Beside him was the mate, on his

other hand the owner. So likewise the boatswain, the purser, and all the officers and men were steadfastly standing to arms. Now struck up the drums, trumpets, and flutes, and at their gay martial music we broke into a roar of cheering. Mr. Cæsar called for a cup of beer. A boy brought him the drink in a silver cup.

"My men," he cried, "I drink to you. Gunners, stand lustily to your ordnance. Seamen, all, shoot straight, and if it come to close quarters, have at the infidels!"

As Mr. Cæsar went to set aside the cup, we heard the bark of a demi-culverin from the nearest galley. A round shot sailed between the master and Mr. Cæsar. It struck the cup out of his hand, and carried the ruin of it sheer overside into the sea. It nothing dismayed the owner. "Fear naught," he shouted. "God, who hath preserved me from this shot, will also deliver us from these villains." Alas, God fought not on our side. Truly His ways are dark. The valour of our struggle deserved a better reward, but it is forbidden to question God's acts.

Then did we gunners let fly our shot against the galleys all around us. They came foaming on, their oars threshing the water, and the drops on their blades sparkling in the sun. Our leaping guns spoke one after the other. The sweating crews bent to the reload. The galleys shot at us with their bow guns as they closed. Soon the range became point-blank. Through the smoke we watched the white splinters fly as our shots struck home. But our ship was punished too. Many a ball went crashing through us be-

tween wind and water, and ere long we were sadly stricken, for the Turks aimed low. Our heaviest piece, a demi-culverin, ran back on the recoil with such force that it snapped the breeching-rope, and crushed the gunner's first mate. He was sore hurt. I bent over him. He groaned out, with a half-smile playing over his face twisted in agony, "I trusted in the Lord till the breeching broke," and so died.

Meanwhile our men had bent their bows, drawing the strings to their ears, and their arrows whistled thick among the galleys' crowded decks. Many a shaft did we see pierce the body of a Turk. The foe paid dearly for their onslaught, but one by one the galleys bumped alongside, threw out grappling-irons and boarded us. Now indeed the fight was hot. So fast as the Turks scrambled over the bulwarks with their flashing scimitars, so they were thrust back overboard by our brown bills and halberds. The officers led their men valiantly, shouted encouragement and cheered every doughty stroke. Mr. Cæsar was cut down and slain by a huge turbaned Turk, but the boatswain, with a mighty lunge, ran him through with a pike with such force that the Turk was carried clean overboard, taking the pike with him. The boatswain fought like a lion. He cleared a little space about him, as the Turks began to give way. But an arquebus shot struck him in the chest, and brake his whistle asunder. He fell to the deck. "Fight on," he groaned. "Never be slaves!"

Panting, we still fought over the decks slippery with the blood of friend and enemy, but by their weight and by pressure of numbers the Turks

poured aboard on the larboard and the starboard sides. So great was the crowd that pressed us back that we could not use our weapons, and those of us left alive were overpowered and disarmed. Many of us would have sooner died than be taken miserably captive by the infidel Turk, and be set to labour cruelly in their galleys. But such a fate seemed to be God's will for us poor souls. Our ship was down by the head, and like to sink. We were haled off to the galleys. The bodies of those oarsmen killed by our shot and some grievously hurt but not dead were heaved overboard. I was roughly pushed down to a bench, the clothes were pulled over my ears and torn off my back, and I was chained to an oar with two other companions in misery. Old hands they were.

So throughout the long summer of blistering heat, in hunger and thirst and weariness, I paid in full for my youthful folly ashore. There was a cuff of steel round my left wrist. To this was riveted a chain fixed to the oar. Round my waist was a broad iron belt chained to the bench whereon I sat. There was a gang-plank running along above and between the lines of rowers on either side of the ship, and on this central gangway walked the overseers, who had a rope to which they clung if the ship heeled over in a sea. They carried whips. *Crack!* would go the cruel flickering lash all along the flinching brown backs, and then a wail of pain, despair, and hate would arise from the crowded benches. If a man broke his heart at the oar, overboard he would go.

'Twas death in life, Dick. I thanked the Lord for my youth and strength, but if it had pleased Him to keep me in that bondage for two years more, I too had died. We were burned black with the sun by day, and were numbed with cold at night. Water often used to spurt in through the oar-holes, and we would sit with our bare feet in water which slapped about and splashed over us till our bodies were caked with sea salt, and our smarting lips were cracking. For garment we had but a pair of linen drawers. The stench from the oar-deck made ~~me~~ me sick at first, but young men are tough, and I became used even to that. Hunger and thirst were always with us. On a long journey there would be a spell of rest once in every hour, while the ship rocked lazily or kept under way with her sail. A sailor would come along the benches and give us water to drink. Our daily food was some bread and a handful of dates. Usually we rowed a long swinging stroke, but in taking position for a fight the rate was quickened, and we kept the time by a loud "Ha!" as we drew the oar to our breasts. God's pity! I saw no hope of deliverance. The brave apostle Paul suffered like unto us, for he hath spoken of being "in journeyings often, in perils in the sea, in labour and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." As he did, so would I endure to the end.

One of the two other men on my oar was a Greek from the Piræus, dark bearded, his curling hair streaked with white. He babbled oft of his wife and children, but I only knew a few words of his lingo.

He knew none of mine, so we mostly spoke, when the scanty chance afforded, with our hands. The other was a big yellow German from one of the Hansa towns. Hamburg, I think it was. He had been once to London, and had a little of the English tongue. He had been taken two years ago by a Turkish pirate lying in wait off the mouth of the Scheldt. There was no end to the pride and daring of those galleys. As in this case, they had come through to the Narrow Seas, though they were fair-weather craft. One had actually attacked Topsham on the flood and was away again on the ebb; and a few years later a great four-banked galley had run up the Dart to Totnes, plundering and burning the wharves, and mightily scaring the good citizens.

We traded and fought up and down the Middle Sea the long summer through. We welcomed a storm, for we always sought safe shelter in foul weather. As the winter drew near, so also approached the time when we should forsake the galleys for dry land. We came at length to our accustomed winter harbour, the great city of Alexandria. Masts and sails and other gear were set on land and put into store, and the sailing-master of the galley and his mariners went to their homes. We rowers were put to further slavery. We lay rough in a prison, with the same diet of bread and dates and water, and worked all day at the building of a church, which the Turks call a mosque, and in which they worship God, whom they call Allah, and Mahomet His prophet. We were shackled with irons

about our legs. I was put to hew stones, others to carry stones, others to drag the cart full of earth, and some to make mortar. Our prison-house was some way out of the city. We marched to our work under guard, and therefore I saw naught of Alexandria.

We captives were of all nations. Besides the few Englishmen, there were Spaniards, men from the cities of Italy and the Adriatic, Greeks, and Africans. The Englishmen in the prison were our red-haired master-gunner, Mr. John Foxe, who was a Suffolk man, Robert Moore of Harwich in Essex, William Wickney of Portsmouth, and myself. By great good fortune, we were kept together in the same galley all the next summer, and returned in October to the same winter quarters.

John Foxe was a man who would never resign himself to his fate, but he would bend it the way he would go. I knew, for he had told me, how eagerly and constantly he watched for a chance of escape from his bondage. He was very skilful with his hands, and by making himself of great service to the Turks by shaving and the cutting of hair, had been granted leave to walk along the road, but still with an iron on his legs. Not far from the road was an eating-house, kept by a man named Pedro. He was a Spaniard born, and had been thirty years in captivity without any attempt to escape, and so had some measure of freedom. Foxe earned a little money by his barbering, and though the gaoler took a toll thereof, Foxe was yet able to resort often to Pedro and obtain a good meal. One day he made

Pedro privy to his plan of escape. Pedro agreed to help, and we three other Englishmen were brought into the plot.

One night Foxe got us three into a corner. "See, boys, see! F-files! I had them from Pedro. One each. I straitly charge each man jack of you to rid yourself of your l-leg-iron by eight of the clock to-morrow night. C-can't do it in prison? No, surely you c-cannot. We'll all go down to Pedro's. How? Just wait till to-morrow, and I'll tell ye."

The next day Foxe paid all the money he had in a bribe to the keeper of the prison to let his three fellow-countrymen go with him along the road. We four clanked painfully down along to Pedro's house, where we nearly filed through our fetters. When night came on, Foxe sent Pedro to the keeper with a message by pretended word of mouth from a magistrate in the city, with whom the keeper was well acquainted, willing the keeper to meet him at Pedro's eating-house. The keeper agreed to go with Pedro, and told the warders not to bar the gate, saying that he would return with all speed. Meanwhile, we ransacked the house for weapons. We each found a knife or dagger of a sort, and Foxe took to himself an old sword, somewhat rusty.

When the keeper had come unto the house, he suspected something, for he saw no light or movement and heard no sound. He straightway ran round the corner of the house into John Foxe, waiting with his rusty blade. "Foxe," he gasped, "what means this?" "Thou b-b-blood-sucking villain," quoth Foxe, "t-t-take what thou hast deserved." He lifted

up the sword and smote the keeper with so furious a stroke that his head flew asunder, and he fell down stark dead. "Quick, off with your irons! And follow me!" We crept stealthily after Foxe along the road until we came to the prison-house. There were three warders by the open gate. "Who goes there?" called one. "Friends all," replied Foxe. We rushed inside. "My masters," said Foxe, "play your parts." I sprang at the nearest with my dagger and stabbed him in the breast, so that he fell dead. All three were instantly despatched. Foxe swung to the gate barred it, and with our help placed a cannon against it. He did not mean to be disturbed. He was a masterpiece.

Then we entered the keeper's lodge, and found the key by his bed. In this room was a chest. I opened it. Ducats! It was full of the coin. But Mr. Foxe said firmly, "Touch it not. We do not want their beastly money. There is warm work ahead of us. We must go light." On this, Moore and I forebore, but Pedro and Wickney stuffed themselves as full as they could with the coin, between their shirts and their skins. Instead Moore and I took hold of two swords which were hanging on the wall, as being likely to be more useful.

We ran to the prison-house doors, opened them, and the captives poured out joyfully. Foxe lost no time. He set the men to furnishing a galley which was lying near by. The mast, sails, and oars were dragged from their store and put aboard, while Foxe, Pedro, we three English, and three or four other lusty men we had armed set about dealing

with the remainder of the warders, who werē shooting at us with arquebuses.

It was a hot skirmish. There were ten of them, and they let fly a volley. Foxe had two holes through his shirt, but was unhurt; Pedro and Wickney dropped. I remember we then rushed them. One I think I killed with my sword, but his fellow raised his musket by the barrel, and brought down the butt upon my head. It must have been a glancing blow, else my skull had been cracked, but I knew no more. ~~Foxe~~ and the unwounded captives got clear out to open sea in their galley, though the forts were firing. But I lay insensible on the ground, and must have been overlooked or left for dead if there was a rescue party, for I was in prison when my senses returned to my body.

° Bitter was my grief, and bitter my punishment. I expected that the Turks would slay me, but they were busying themselves with the building of a great army of galleys for some war, and needed every oarsman they could get. So I received the bastinado. This is a torture. The soles of your feet are beaten with rods. It was many years since, but my feet tingle now when I think of it.

I received the bastinado seven times, and by the time the season came again for the galleys to put to sea, I was in a desperate mood. But somehow I endured the weary day-long tugging at the oar in cold and wet, in heat and thirst and hunger, and when the ship was anchored for the night, the sleep of exhaustion in the filthy stinking hold.

So passed the days and months—aye, Dick, and

even years. In the early summer of 1571 galleys from Alexandria, of which ours was one, went up and down the Adriatic, burning and sacking churches and houses on the eastern shore. The Turks brought rich plunder on board. One day with shouts and laughter they threw on the deck a huge jewelled crucifix, robbed from some church, gouged out the jewels and hewed it in pieces, with monstrous indignities. Good Protestants have little reverence for such images, yet rage filled me at the sight, or rather the sounds, for I could see but little.

My wrath, though, was soon swallowed up in weariness. Even among the galley-slaves rumours abound, and somehow we knew that there was going to be war with the Christians. As the summer drew to a close, there was a vast assembly of galleys from Istamboul, Alexandria, and Algiers in the Gulf of Lepanto. I knew where we were to, for we passed Patras on the way in. We knew (I know not how) that the chief of all the Turkish armada was one Ali Pasha. My galley was the admiral of the Alexandrian fleet, and carried the pasha of the city. The poop was gilded within and without, and under the feet of the pasha was a rich tapestry carpet. The galley had seven brass guns in her prow, and thirty oars on either side. These oars were mighty great sweeps, with five slaves to each. I was at the end of my oar, and so above the rest. I therefore had more air to breathe. We did not know how many galleys were there assembled, but there must have been hundreds. It was a sight truly terrible. The galleys were all gilded and painted in bright colours, beset

with flags and streamers. When they discharged their ordnance in salute to the admiral, the roll and rumble of the guns was like peals of thunder from on high.

Early one October morning Ali's great armada weighed anchor with a stiff easterly breeze bellying out the sails. The beat and thresh of thousands upon thousands of oars was as the surge of the ocean upon the rocks of home. We miserable slaves had none of the lust of battle; we ardently wished the Christians to conquer. Then there would be some hope of rescue, though we were like to be slain by the shot or bullets of our friends. The man below me at my oar was a Genoese, black-bearded, black-eyed, with a skin burnt (like mine) by the sun and wind, to the colour of ox-hide. He could speak a little Spanish, and I had gotten some of that tongue in my journeyings to New Spain and the Islands. We could therefore gasp out a word now and then. He was called Giacomo, and had been taken five years ago off Zante. He was a married man, with two young children, and maybe one he had never seen. He told me he had been shipped as a supercargo in a trading bark of Genoa to oversee the sale of merchandise and buy spices; a young man, his first independent commission. Truly life is cruel for us all. During a brief spell of rest Giacomo warned me what would happen in action with a determined enemy. "You know what happens when the oars are smashed with shot. But have you had an enemy's prow shearing through your oars? The oars buck, and break your chest in. Try and watch the oar

coming, and if you can, duck under it before it knocks you backward and snaps."

The never-conquered Turkish power moved westward in half-moon formation, leaving Patras on the larboard bow, and sweeping across all those miles of sea between the shallows on the north and the deep water to the south. Suddenly cymbals clashed, horns blared, and a high yell arose from all that great armada. "Our friends the enemy in sight!" Giacomo bawled in my ear. Soon we felt we were pulling harder. It seemed as if the wind had veered right round and was against us. The Alexandrian galleys were on the right, near the northern shore. I can tell you little of how the battle went. A soldier sees not much, a galley-slave still less. All I knew was that the ordnance began shooting, and we could hear the twang and hiss of the arrows, and the sharp crack of the arquebuses as the ships came within range.

There was a terrible grinding crash and jar as a Christian ship came up alongside. *Crack, crack*, the oars snapped one by one as she came up with the wind and her prow shore through our bank of oars. A shriek arose from the rowers. Forewarned, I waited breathlessly, then ducked my head. The butt of the oar swung back, and carried me with it by the chain. The bench split and broke, the wrist chain snapped. With the broken bench tethered to me by the chain about my waist, I was free, yet not free. An oar butt was wedged in such a position as to hold me fast to the bench behind, from which the rower had been overset. I could not move. Giacomo was alive, but still tethered to his bench. Overhead

the waves of battle swayed to and fro. The Christian galley flew the ensign of the Lion of Saint Mark, and the stamping Venetian soldiers swarmed aboard us. A shout from the Turks, calling upon their God and His Prophet, was followed by a rush and a charge, which cleared the decks of the Christians. But they came on once more. The wet, slippery decks of the galley rang again with the onset of the Venetians, and at last a long shout of joy went up as the Turk's sail came rustling down.

Giacomo had fainted. I, groaning beneath the weight of the oar, bleeding from a cut in my side where the waist-belt had torn me, scarred, verminous, starved, and exhausted, called out in the Spanish tongue, "If you be good Christian men, come down and take a poor soul out of hell!" A tall officer, splendid in armour richly inlaid with gold, heard me, and knowing the Spanish, gave an order. Soon armourers and carpenters came along the ruined benches, knocking off our irons, levering up the timbers, and rescuing such Christians as were alive. Stiff, bent, and fainting, Giacomo and I surveyed the scene. The decks were red and cumbered with corpses lying huddled across each other. The rigging was cut, the mast swayed drunkenly, bulwarks were smashed, and jagged splintered stumps were all that remained of the oars. We were given food, drink, and clothing, and flung ourselves down in a corner, free men at last.

It was now late in the afternoon, and looking round through the drifting smoke, it was plain that the Turks had had the worst of it. The sea, covered

with broken oars and masts, with dead bodies, and with all the ruin and wreckage of battle, began to stir beneath us. Huge clouds were towering above the red sunset, and as darkness drew on, a storm broke in thunder, lightning, and rain. Burning galleys flared to heaven and sank hissing beneath the waves. We had been transferred to the Venetian ship, itself battered and torn, and the victorious fleet rode out the storm at anchor in the harbour of Patala.

Thus did I survive the great and famous battle of Lepanto wherein Spanish, Venetian, and the Pope's own galleys had beaten the invincible Turk. Our galley was a noted fast sailer, and we were chosen to go ahead with the glad news to Venice. We made our stately way up the Adriatic Sea. The great galley bore Giacomo and me and a handful of other wretches like us, rejoicing in our liberty. No one asked of me my religion. I told no one that I was a Protestant, or Lutheran, as they call it, and I attended the thanksgiving Mass on board. God forgive me if I were wrong, but we were all Christians together, and I did not choose to risk my new freedom. Thereafter I was to fall into the hands of the Spanish inquisitors, as I will tell you in good time. Cruel devils they were, but, like my father, I could neither see why men should slay and torture their fellows for their faith, nor why they should submit to be tortured. I am no martyr, Dick, but something of a coward. I fear the fire and the rack. There seems no sense to 'n.

One day, in the pearly light of dawn, we saw

faint on the horizon the domes and towers of Venice, queen of the sea, as her people love to call her. Indeed, she doth ride upon the sea, which filleth her streets, so that boats do go to and fro instead of carts, and men and women visit one another by water. We had great heaps of turbans on our decks, and we trailed a Turkish ensign over our stern in the sea. We shot off our guns as we approached, waving our caps, dancing together, and crying "Victory! Victory!" The people of the city gave our galley a ~~frantic~~ welcome. Men and women kissed and embraced us, calling us heroes and I know not what. I must have embraced five or six dark and lovely *signorinas*. Oh, 'tis good to be on the winning side! When the main fleet arrived, the Duke and the Council in their crimson robes, the bishops and priests splendid in vestments of pearl and cloth of gold, and a vast crowd of people assembled in the square of Saint Mark. We all poured into the church after Messer Veniero the admiral, a tall, strong man of threescore years and ten, with a grey curling beard. The church was filled with a great press of people close packed together. They sang *Te Deum Laudamus*, and held a High Mass. I could see naught of it, but the music was mighty fine. Soon afterwards I said farewell to Giacomo. I hope he reached Genoa, and found his wife and children.

The days of the supreme power and glory of Venice were past, but still she was a rich and mighty city, very strong and populous, and her fleets of ships brought in great store of pepper, cinnamon, cardamoms, cloves, and cassia. Twice a year or

more a caravella used to sail for England with spices, and bring back woollen cloth, clothing, and hardware. By great good fortune there was one in harbour that had been delayed by the battle, and was due to sail for South Harapton. The captain willingly agreed to ship me as mate to his gunner for the voyage. The Venetians at that moment were moved to do any thing for those who had fought at Lepanto, and I as a victim of the Turks shared in that glory.

While the ship was lading and waiting for a wind, I wandered about the city. When I first saw Venice from the sea, great piled-up clouds were brooding over the towers and domes away across the wide lagoons. On a calm night, under the moon, the palaces of the nobles glimmered along the margin of the silver gleaming sea. Venice hath many score of fine churches beside that of Saint Mark. Saint Mark's Church, though I thought it dark and dismal, is passing rich and sumptuous within, full of jewels and gold and shrines and images. Without, it is all round arches and domes.

There are hundreds of cunning bridges across the watery streets, whereof one is called the Bridge of the Rialto. The Rialto is the place where their merchants do congregate. In Venice there are traders and strangers from all over the earth. I was much pleased with the tall painted mooring-poles that stand up out of the water of the streets or canals, but what surprised me was that no man may carry a weapon, except he be a soldier, or a scholar of Padua. Some few gentlemen of Venice of high dig-

nity and countenance may so do, but not without a licence. The women—even the tradesmen's wives—have gowns of silk, with one to carry the train, and monstrous high-heeled shoes. Men I saw with doublets of velvet, slashed sleeves laced with silk ribbons, and mantles of damask or crimson silk.

There are a thousand Jews in the city, and some are reputed very rich. They dwell in a special place called the Ghetto, and yellow by law must wear caps. For my further knowledge of this people, I went into their synagogue upon their sabbath day, which is a Saturday. Their synagogue is round, with a space in the midst for one to read aloud their sacred books, and they wear white linen gowns over their apparel.

I abode many days a-shipboard, thinking we should sail the next day or the next. At last, after long tarrying for a wind, we set sail, and went that day and night not above fifty miles. Three days out the wind turned altogether contrary, and you can judge of my fear when about five miles off we descried a sail, which I recognised as a Turkish galley. For my part, I was determined not to be taken alive again, and fell to praying, an exercise to which I had become unaccustomed in the past three years. To the joy of all, God sent a merry gale of wind out of the east, so that we ran for many a league before it, laughing at the Turk. The wind had moderated, but was still fresh, when the ship's cat fell overboard. The owner, sailing with us, did love this cat. The master, knowing this, ordered away a boat with half a dozen men. The cat was valiantly swimming, and

was taken up half a mile from the ship. They could not have acted with more haste if one of the ship's company had been in like peril. The Italians seemingly love their cats, as in England we especially esteem the spaniel dog.

The wind continued with us, and every day I was nearer home. I came to love the sharp smell of the black-pepper berries in their sacks, the bales of sweet tawny cinnamon, the hot dry ginger root, the aromatic nutmegs. They, like me, would soon reach England and become part of that dear country for which, a lonely exile, I longed. It was a weary voyage, and at that season of the year we often had to put in to harbour for shelter. We called and traded at Cadiz, Oporto, Bordeaux, and several other ports. Gradually we crept up the coast of France, kept Ushant well to leeward, and at long last entered the English Channel. Then we saw the Needles to starboard, passed through the narrow gut between Hurst and Yarmouth, into the Solent, green and grey English ground all about me. I blessed even the English seamews wheeling and crying, rejoiced at the sight of the English mariners as they hailed us tossing in the sea.

I was again favoured with good fortune at Hampton, for I found a little bark coasting westwards to Exeter and Plymouth. The master, one Thomas Codd, agreed to take me and to receive payment for my passage on reaching Topsham. We had to wait a week for a wind, and we called at Poole, Bridport, and Lyme. The year was almost at the spring when I saw the foam-flecked sands and the low red cliffs

of the Exe mouth, and came up with the tide to my native town. Ashore I hastened to the cider factory. In a corner of the warehouse I saw my father busy with his ledgers. I called to him. He started up. The ledger fell to the floor with a crash, he gave a joyous shout, and I ran to his open arms.

CHAPTER V

THE HOLY OFFICE

WELL, Dick, your town and my town is a good abiding place for a sailor weary of wind and wave and oar. I used to sit in the sun in the afternoon beneath the high wall where the salmon nets were drying and listen to the lap and gurgle of the tide as it came flooding up over the pinkish-grey mud, covering the bare ribs of an abandoned bark, restoring to an even keel the forlorn boats that had heeled over when the ebb had left them. I used to go out sometimes seining for salmon in the little red skiffs, and now and then watch a ship set sail for the Newfoundland fishing-banks. The sun would set calm and serene over Exminster, turning the water to gold, or red and angry behind great cloud-castles, as the light slowly paled and faded. And I would think of the plunge of the blazing sun into the tropic sea, the swift onrush of the darkness, and the light of the flashing southern stars. I had had enough of the sea, I thought, but even as I vowed I would stay at home I smelt the spicy off-shore wind, saw the dazzling sand and the palm-trees, and felt the fierce kiss of the sun. I swore I would not go back, and yet I knew I would, some day.

Meanwhile, I had still not a groat to my name. I could not bide for ever at home with my father keeping me in idleness. My thoughts turned to Ply-

mouth once again. Perhaps Mr. Hawkins would give me work in his yard, in his powder factory, or even as a storekeeper. I was one of the survivors of San Juan d'Ullua, and he did not readily forget the men who had served him aforetime. True I had forsaken Captain Drake in London, but I considered I had wiped that out by my sufferings in the galleys, and I could tell a story that would make my misfortune less discreditable to myself. •

I determined to try, and so, the wind being favourable, embarked in a coasting-vessel. Young James Bellay's father was her master. Rough weather drove us into Torbay for shelter, and we abode one day in Paignton harbour. We sailed next morning, and were soon to Plymouth. I found Mr. John had just been appointed Treasurer of the Queen's Navy, and had gone to live in London. However, I told a good enough tale to Mr. William, who indeed received me very kindly, and I was given work as a storekeeper, for which my short term of apprenticeship with Mr. Horrell had fitted me tolerably well.

It was at this time that I learnt to play the treble viol. I was lodged with a master baker, Mr. Prowse, and his two apprentices, and all three were something skilled at an instrument. The baker's wife and daughter did sing, and we had many a merry evening. The first tune I learnt was *Greensleeves*, which the elder apprentice was forever whistling. We heard that it had raged like a fire in London. It is curious to mark how an air that becomes the fashion in London is first played by the gentry, then is played

and sung by the citizens, and whistled by every 'prentice boy. Within a year it hath swept through the whole country, from Bristol to York, from Norwich to Plymouth. So it was with *Greensleeves*. Many another merry dance and song did we enjoy at good Mr. Prowse's, and since then I have always taken a fiddle to sea, where it hath been to me a solace, as tobacco is now. Blow up the fire with they bellowses, Nephew, and I'll tell ye of old Prowse's daughter Margaret.

She was a bright twinkly-eyed maid, was Margaret, and I loved her sweet little voice. It was like the canary birds in the Fortunate Islands. One holiday afternoon in the early summer of 1573 she was out walking with me upon the Hoe. The sky was blue, and the sea was bluer yet, a deep dark hue flecked with white in the fresh breeze. As we trod the grass bright with daisies, there was a commotion and a running together of people to where a gallows stretched out its one ugly arm. As we moved nearer to get a better look, the body of some wrongdoer was strung up to the gallows. It hung there kicking, and on a sudden grew still. My little maid (for so I was beginning to think of her) had a tear in her eye.

"You'm tender-hearted, look-so-to-me," said I. "I doubt not he was a scurvy rogue we'm well rid of."

"Maybe," replied little Margaret. "Yet 'tis pity to see a strong man fighting hard for life and breath, which be all choked out of 'n. Let's go away to some quiet place away from this busy Hoe."

We took a ferry and a footpath till we came out upon a cliff-top. In front of us, sheer below, lay the

sunlit sea. On our left hand, far below us again, a little stream came winding through a narrow cleave and tumbled into the Channel waves. There were more red cliffs beyond. Scabious and buttercup covered the steep slopes. Gulls were poised on the pinnacles of the rocky precipices, at the foot of which the swinging seas exploded in upflung bursts of spray. On a twisted thorn-tree we saw a cuckoo. He called twice, thrice, then broke into a hoarse chattering cackle. His mate for the nonce flew out from a bush near by, uttering her bubbling cry. The wind sighed softly up over the slopes.

I pointed out these beauties to my Margaret. "'Tis a nice look-around, 'sure 'nough,'" she said. We flung ourselves down on the grass and lay there in a drowsy stillness. No sounds of strife were there, but only the cuckoo's chant, the weary wailing of the restless gulls, the sigh of the wind in the grasses, and the everlasting thunder of the sea.

"Your talk is ever of the wars," said my Margaret. "When will the wars cease? Soon? 'He maketh wars to cease in all the world.' But He doth not, seemingly. I don't understand it."

"Men have always fought and I suppose they always will."

"I don't believe that's true. But you men are mostly fools, and we women are fools to let you fight. My brother would go for a soldier and was killed in the wars in Ireland. He must be dead, for we never heard any more of him. And I know you'll be gone next, to play with your foolish cannon in the Netherlands."

"Would you be sorry if I did?"

"Oh, I care not."

I wondered. I knew not what to do, Dick, whether to lay her aboard, as they say at sea, and come to close quarters, or to sheer off and keep at long range. I am sure now that I loved the lass, but I was already restless. I had no money, and lusted after a good fat prize, Spanish gold, perhaps, to make me rich. Furthermore, I had not the consent of the maid's father, and an ill-paid storekeeper would not get it. Her father would soon be disposing of her in marriage to someone more pleasing to him.

Still, I made bold to slip my arm around her.

"You'm a little darling," I whispered in her pretty ear. "I be going a-voyaging, and I'm coming back rich as Dives in the Book. Though I must contrive to steer clear of hell's torment. And then, then, it would be Paradise, if——"

"Oh, Jonathan, do 'ee not! You'll go, and you'll not come back. Captain Drake, he've been gone years, and where's he to now? None knoweth. He's dead, sure enough, and his fine young gentlemen and his mariners."

"But would 'ee marry me, Margaret, my dear pretty one?"

"Oh, I know not. Oh, it's no use, Jonathan. Father'll forbid us. You see, you haven't——"

"Ah, but if I come back with a chest of gold doubloons, with rare fine jewels of the Indies, what then?"

"Oh, Jonathan! Perhaps I might. But Father'll be having me wed soon, too soon, I'm thinking."

Well, I brought her back home, she silent, I also, and sorrowful. Between her and me was a great chasm. How to bridge it? How is it that between men and women there are so many bars? We are most of us in prison in some way, either by our own fault, or victims of the gods for their sport. They had their heartless game with me. How you shall hear, if so you can be patient with an old man.

On a Sunday in August of that year we were all to morning prayer in St. Andrew's Church. The parson was preaching from the text, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days." "Forasmuch," said he, "a merchant doth send forth a ship upon a venture to far-off lands, by the will of God she doth return after many days, bearing him great riches and profit if he has had faith in God's mercy, so it behoves us all to do what is right, no matter how hazardous it may seem, casting all our care upon Him, and having faith in Him. So shall we see our good deeds repaid to us an hundredfold in spiritual blessings, even as the owner, when at long last his ship comes home——"

I was nigh asleep in the pew on that warm drowsy forenoon as the good man prosed on, when my ears picked up running footfalls outside. A man, breathless with excitement and with running, with sweat pouring down his face, and by his radiant countenance bursting with good news, marched a-tiptoe up to the Mayor, and spoke to him in a loud whisper. The preacher droned on with the sermon. Mr. Mayor arose, gathered his robes about him, and strode clattering down the aisle, his wife and his boys and

girls following him. Good news as well as bad flies fast, and in a moment the whisper was round the great church. Mr. Prowse leaned forward to the pew in front, then turned smiling. "Come, wife," he said, "down to quayside." "What is it? What is it?" came eagerly from Mistress Prowse and Margaret. "Frankie Drake!" he replied, and at that we all leapt up and went after him. Pew by pew the church was emptying fast. Still the parson, scandalised but curious, continued his preaching, for aught I know, till the benches were bare, but he followed his flock in the end. I saw him down along to the ~~quays~~ quays, giving thanks.

All Plymouth was down by the Barbican. A gallant ship was being warped in, St. George to her maintop and long silken pennants streaming in her wake. The rowers were pulling as hard as they could, the mariners were lining the bulwarks cheering wildly. There was Tom Moon, thickset and tall, leaning over the side, waving his hat to his wife, who was screaming something to him from the shore. Nobody, least of all Tom, could hear her, for with shouts of joy men and women were recognising their sons and husbands and brothers and lovers, as these young men came home. Many were the anxious faces and tear-filled eyes as loved ones were sought and found not, but shouts of triumph drowned their sobs. On the poop stood my little captain, waving his hat and laughing.

"What have 'ee brought home, Frankie?" roared a voice from the shore.

"Gold!" came a great shout from the ship. "Gold

beyond all telling!" And we all fell to cheering again.

Eager hands caught the ropes that were outflung and made them fast. The gang-plank was run out, and as Drake's boys landed on English ground, English folk took them to their hearts. Mistress Moon caught up her skirts and ran on board to join Tom, who was left in charge of the treasure guard. Drake was mobbed by the crowd, who carried him to the church, where the parson and the clerk led the singing of "O be joyful in the Lord." Afterwards, outside, Drake saw me. He never forgot an old ship-mate.

"Heard, you young limmer," he cried, "where've 'ee been, to?"

"Three years in a Turkish galley, sir," quoth I.

"I know not how 'you came there, but you've missed a joyous venture. I've seen the South Sea and I mean to sail 'n one day."

"I'm with 'ee, sir." "And I." "And I." "And I." There was more cheering.

You may well guess, Nephew, how all this did unsettle me. Had Captain Drake been enlisting men for another venture like his last, I would have gone gladly and at once, but he did not. He disappeared. He had dared to rob the mule trains to Nombre de Dios laden with gold for the Spanish treasure fleet, so avenging the private wrongs of Captain Hawkins and himself, but though he had a secret licence and commission from the Queen (so men said), if the Spaniards had caught him they would have hanged him for a pirate, sure enough.

The taverns of Plymouth and the whole West Country rang with the tale of his deeds. His men spent their prize-money freely, and told how he took the town of Nombre de Dios, and was going to seize the gold and jewels in the treasury, but that he fell down in a faint from a wound, and his boys bore him back to the boats instead of the gold, as being the greater treasure. When a storm had scattered the boats after the capture of the mule train and all seemed lost, he had made a raft of fallen trees, and with a fir-pole for a mast and a biscuit-bag for a sail, he had set off and found the boats. All this and much more went the round of the taverns with shouts of laughter at the Spaniards' discomfiture. From the taverns it was carried to the great houses, from the great houses to the Court. Captain Drake was said to be in London, to have seen the Queen, to be packed off to Ireland. Meanwhile I, like many another, craved a share of the riches that lay overseas for the taking. I remembered the cry of the London watermen as they stood at the foot of the steps above London Bridge, "Westward ho!" It was Westward ho! for me.

It was not long before my chance came. A certain merchant, Mr. Andrew Gifford of Bristol, had fitted out a bark of a hundred tons named the *Bear*. He had chartered her in London, and went in her as captain, with one Thomas Coxon of Limehouse as her master. A man they had shipped as gunner's mate fell sick, and when they put in to Plymouth to buy beer, beef, and biscuit, which they could get more cheaply there than in London, he was so sick

that they had to put him ashore. Mr. Gifford knew Mr. William Hawkins, and asked him if there was in the port a good and suitable man to take the sick gunner's place. Mr. William knew everything. He knew that I was discontented, so would I like to go? The *Bear* was bound for the Main, and who knew what they might find there? He himself was taking a small share in the venture. The *Bear* would be away the first moment the wind went north or east. I thanked him, and signed on at once as a gunner's mate.

Now I had to say farewell to Mr. Prowse, the master-baker, and his family. And Margaret. I had her alone for two or three minutes. "Margaret," I said, "once again I be going to win treasure and wealth, and when I come back, if you will let me, I'll ask your father for you, if you are not pledged first."

Her lips trembled. "Oh, you must go, I suppose. You'm not be happy else. I'll ask Father not to pledge me, if he'll consent. But come back soon, soon. Us'll miss 'ee."

I kissed her, though I'd not right, and if Mr. Prowse had come in at that moment there would have been hard words and expulsion for me, with perhaps a beating and low diet for her. Poor Margaret.

Henry Mace was gunner. He was about thirty-five years old, with fair blue eyes and straw-coloured hair and beard. His talk was all of caronades and actions and how he had served a demiculverin in the Netherlands wars. I know not what

doughty deeds he had wrought on land, but I do know that he had never fired any ordnance at sea, save only salutes. He told me of the reason for Mr. Gifford's venture on which we were about to be embarked. In the summer of 1577, Gifford returned home from the island of Tenerife in the Canaries, where he had been living and trading for a time. The following November he freighted a small ship of Bristol to sail for the Canaries with woollen cloth and other merchandise, hardware, and the like. In her went a man named Drew of Barnstaple to act as his factor or supercargo. The said Drew sent home the bark with a cargo of wine. He stayed on in the islands to dispose of the goods to the best advantage, and also to obtain a lading of wine and sugar for another ship.

In due time the aforesaid ship, the *Christopher* of Dartmouth, arrived at Tenerife. Her captain, whose name I forget, expected to find his wine and sugar ready, but to his astonishment and anger he was forthwith clapped into prison, together with Mr. Drew. They were told that Mr. Gifford had been denounced to the Inquisition and that all his goods were confiscate. The captain of the *Christopher*, through the kind help of a friar, was freed from the Inquisition, though it cost him the whole of his cargo, and returned home in his empty ship. I never heard the fate of Mr. Drew. Hence the *Bear* was fitted out as an unlicensed privateer on a voyage of revenge and recompense. This just suited me. Here was a good chance of prize-money.

The wind shifted to a favourable quarter. Those

on shore leave who were missing were combed out of the taverns by the boatswain's party and a sheriff's officer. The men began to sing *Blow, northern wind*, and at the capstan :

*"With a heave and a ho
And a rumbelow,
Yo, ho, the anchor's a-weigh O!"*

The good ship gathered way. A merry gale swelled our stretched canvas. The farewell cries of the watchers on shore came faintly to us across the widening water. Our trumpeters were playing. Mr. and Mrs. Prowse and dear Margaret stood waving handkerchiefs until distance and the late autumn mists took them from my sight.

Our first landfall was one of the Cape Verde Islands, where we took in some large tortoises, and traded for victuals with knives and such like. Then we shaped our course over the main ocean for the West Indies. At first the weather was fair. As the long bright days slowly passed, the gunner and his mates would lie on deck beneath the awnings making cartridges, and Mr. Mace would speak of his experiences among the Dutchmen.

"The Spanish infantry, Alva's men, were marvelous fine fighters. My battery belonged to the English army that was helping the Dutch. It was sited behind a ditch and some willow-trees, in front of our foot. The Spaniards were advancing slowly in two long lines. My guns kept tearing holes in their ranks, but they instantly closed up. We had fired

two rounds from each piece when the leading line, now quite close, halted, fixed their arquebuses in crotch and fired a volley. Three of our gunners were hit and many fell in the ranks behind us, who should have advanced to our front. The second line of Spaniards came through the first, trailing their pikes. They reached the ditch, resolutely splashed through it up to their waists, and re-formed. Again we gunners shot off our pieces. We had them slightly in enfilade and did great execution. They still came on. Our foot had not waited for them, but took themselves off, with the Dutchmen, to within the walls of the city. They Spaniards were close upon us. I had no time to reload and so retired, being shot at by their arquebusiers, and having my coat and breeches pierced. So we fought the Spanish army by ourselves. But alack, we lost our ordnance, because the foot-soldiers and the few horse would not face the Spanish infantry."

There was much more of this, mostly to the great credit of Gunner Mace, but when it began to be wearisome, the weather grew dirty. Speedily the wind rose, till at last it was blowing in great clapping gusts with a noise like cannon firing. One terrible burst with rain, thunder, and lightning tore and split our foresail, the only sail we had spread. Mr. Gifford read prayers and we sang a psalm. On this voyage, only if it blew hard, we had prayers.

The storm endured for a long time, and then when it had abated, we forgot to give thanks. We looked out over the ugly grey sea, salt water stretching away for evermore, and were weary for the land.

But at length the sun did shine again, restoring our hearts and minds, and we made a coast, which by our reckoning was Florida. It seemed a Paradise to us poor sailors. There was the scent of snowy orange-blossom with the golden fruit together on the trees, heavy clusters of great puts hanging on the palms, and huge scarlet flowers, matching the red sunset that flamed in the sky. There be many swamps in this country, and mosquitoes do range about there. Mosquitoes? What be they? 'Tis a Spanish name for a sort of small gnat with a long bill that doth prick a man on the face or hands, doth suck his blood, and maketh him to swell wonderfully. Then in the waters stand flocks of flamingos, bright pink birds with long curving necks and thin legs a yarf long. There we found the pelican also, which is a very ugly bird. It is like a swan in body and legs, but has a long, thick beak, from the lower part thereof down to the gullet is a skin or pouch of such bigness as can take a fish so large as a man's thigh. There are many alligators also like the trunks of trees in the dark water, silent, motionless, waiting.

In due time, after gathering many fruits, we left that shore and held on southward. One afternoon we saw a cloud in the sky, with a long tail like to the tail of a serpent, which did hang as it were into the sea. This whirling pillar of water came swiftly towards us. We were greatly frightened, but God be thanked, it passed us well to starboard. I had seen a waterspout before, but never had it come so close.

We sailed for many days across that sea, and reckoned we were about thirty leagues from San

Juan d'Ullua, when a wild northerly wind began to blow. The waves grew higher and higher, till the tearing gale heaved up the hills of seas. Our brave labouring ship rode up the steep walls, flinging clouds of spray aside, steadied herself for an instant on the crest, and shot down to the abyss. Day after day she was tossed in the sea, till one morning we found her filling fast where a seam had opened in the stern. The master's mate took a party down to the hold, splashing their way along in the dark till they found the leak and tried to stop it with mattresses. Meanwhile the master shouted, "Cut away the mainmast, yarely now!" and this was done. "Master Gunner, collect all spare hands and cast overboard all the guns you can!" "Aye, aye, sir," said Mr. Mace. We toiled sadly at this labour. But all was of no avail. The waves still were raging high, and through the misty rain we could descry the rocky shore. Despairing, we waited for the ship to strike. With a mighty crash she drove furiously upon the rocks, which tore the bottom out of her. The rending waves began to break the ship to pieces. The foremast fell, and as it rolled overside, several of us clung to it and were plunged into the boiling sea. The breath was almost out of my body. I swallowed much water, but somehow I held on, and with five others I was cast up sorely bruised and very weary on to a stony beach. When we could look back the wreck of our ship had disappeared.

Besides myself there were saved from destruction William Woodbine of London, our carpenter, John Chudley of Exeter, James Fry, Zachary Ellis, and

Peter Polruan. We were full of sea water, and wet, with little chance of drying, for it still did rain pitilessly. Fry spoke to us as we lay gasping and weary, and said: "Let us return thanks to Almighty God for that He hath delivered us from the peril of the sea," and began to sing a psalm in a quavering, half-strangled voice. When we had somewhat recovered from our exhaustion, we got painfully to our feet (for we were stiff with bruises). Shivering, we set out to walk along the shore. Everywhere was great quantity of mighty trees, with roots and all, carried to this coast by the storm from God knoweth where, maybe from Florida, hundreds of leagues away over. All night it rained cruelly, and we were soaked and hungry. On the one hand was the sea, on the other deep woods where might be wild Indians, so that of necessity we had to go through the marshy country in between, where we found a sort of track.

Mr. Woodbine, the carpenter took command, and led the way as we marched along in file, wet and miserable. Shortly before dawn it ceased to rain, and when the sun came up we were quickly dried. We were fain to make us hats of bark and leaves. The track led us near the trees, and all around us were grasses higher than our heads. Suddenly from out the trees came a terrible wild yell which stiffened us with fear. A flight of arrows fell all about us, though by God's mercy none of us was hurt. Through the long grass rushed a crowd of savages, to which being weak and unarmed we were constrained to yield. They had long and streaming

black hair, and were of surpassing ugliness, for their faces were painted yellow, red, green, and blue.

It was plain that they thought we were their enemies the Spaniards. I shouted, in Spanish, "No Spaniard, no Spaniard!" praying that they would understand. It seemed that they did so, for they let us be. After some talk among themselves, they rushed forward and set upon Woodbine the carpenter, Fry, and Polruan, and stripped them of their clothing, leaving them as naked as they were born. Me, Chadley, and Ellis they did not so use. We supposed that it was because we had dark-coloured clothes, and the garments of the others were of a brighter hue. Then they departed, and we fell laughing at the plight of our companions.

We shared our clothing between us all. We felt no cold, indeed it was very hot, but it was comical withal to see one with a shirt and no breeches, another with breeches and no shirt, and one with a coat and naught else.

Slowly we pushed on in the same direction for the space of two days, living on fruits we found by the way, oftentimes greatly annoyed by mosquitoes which sucked our blood, now through high grass, now through brambles and bushes which we had to part with sticks. We crossed a river, paddling astride a fallen tree for fear of alligators.

"Up that tree with you, Heard," said Mr. Woodbine. "See if you can espy a village, a hut, or *anything* beside these trees and creepers!"

I saw naught, but the third or fourth time I

climbed there was a river. I slid quickly down to report. As I leapt the last few feet to the earth we all heard a sudden sharp *crack*!

"What was that?" exclaimed Polruan.

"That was an arquebus shot off, my lad," said Mr. Woodbine. "And it did not go off by itself. Saw you anything, Heard?"

"No humankind, sir, but a big shining river winding to the sea."

"There must be white men somewhere near," sang out Chudley. "They'll help us. Glory be!"

"Be not too sure," warned Woodbine. "As like as not they'll slay us."

Nevertheless we were greatly encouraged, for we could not march for ever and ever in those mighty forests, destitute and forlorn. Half an hour later, as we laboured through the thickets, a cock crew, which also we heard with joy. At last we came to the banks of the river. As we lay resting by the waterside, wondering whence came the arquebus-shot and the cock-crow, we perceived a number of Spaniards on the other side of the river, riding to and fro on horseback. They saw us, and there was much pointing at us, and argument and consultation between them. Many Indian canoes lay moored by the bank. Eight horsemen got themselves into the canoes and were paddled over by the Indians. Their horses swam over after them, being led by the reins. They disembarked not half a short bowshot away, hauled their horses out with much commotion and splashing, remounted, and charged down upon us with their lances at the point. At that William

Woodbine ordered us to throw up our hands to show that they were empty of weapons, and in token of submission. Riding up, the Spaniards reined in their horses and raised their lances, seeing that we were white men and not the Indian savages they had supposed us to be.

They hailed the Indians and called for more canoes. We were ferried over to the other side. Woodbine said to me, "Hear, you have some Spanish, ask them for food." I did so. "Very well, Englishman," said he who appeared to be the leader, "the Indians here have some bread. You shall have some." So we were given bread made of their country corn that the Spaniards call maize, and never did bread taste sweeter or more pleasant than this. We were marched between the laughing horsemen, a sorry spectacle in our odds and ends of rags, to a town a few miles away.

The town was well set about with fruit-trees, oranges, lemons, pomegranates, and apricots; and dwelling there was a multitude of Indians and negroes, and several hundred Spaniards besides. It was an unwholesome and an unhealthy place, look-so-to-me, by reason of the great heat and the mosquitoes. We were haled before the Governor, a short and bitter little man, with twirling mustachios.

"Who are you?" he shouted. "Where are you from? English pigs! I'll hang the lot of you!"

This was miserable entertainment for a beginning.

"Where's your ship?" he went on. Then, as a thought struck him, "What money have you?"

Search the prisoners. That'll not take long, ha!"

There was in truth very little money, for the Indians that took our clothes took the money with them, and the rest of us had but a score or so of pesos between us. When he had taken all we had, he caused us to be put into a little shed much like a hog-sty, where we were almost smothered. We were given some cooked maize such as they feed their hogs withal, and were told we were English dogs and Lutheran heretics. There we abode, gasping and in misery for three whole days, not knowing what would become of us, and expecting every moment to be taken out and hanged. We could look for little else, for we had come to make wars with them.

Sure enough, an armed party of Spaniards and Indians came to release us from prison, and we perceived that one carried a number of new halters. "God have mercy upon us," cried Fry, "and forgive us all our sins." "Amen," said we all. For my part, I trembled and shook, but when we were come out of our prison-house they took the halters, with them bound our arms behind us, and coupled us together, marching us two by two through the town. So through the country we went towards the city of Mexico, a long journey of I know not how many leagues. There were but two Spaniards in charge of us, and a guard of Indians who walked on either side carrying bows and quivers full of arrows.

In the evening of the second day we came unto a small town, where there was a monastery of White Friars. These good men did receive us very courteously, giving us hot mutton and broth and fruits,

garments also made of white baize to cover ourselves withal, and shoes with hempen soles for our feet. We were loath to leave them on the morrow morn. In the next town to which we came we found some Black Friars, who also used us fairly and gave us meat. The Spanish folk had pity on us and helped us, for Ellis and I were sick and feverish. We still went on, bound two by two, but after about five and forty miles more, we came to a more temperate and well-tilled country, where little ditches carried water from the rivers into all their cornfields.

Of the two Spaniards that were with us one was an old man who treated us well all the way, and would go ahead to make provision for our needs, both food and lodging. The other was a young man, for whom I conceived a deadly hate. He was a cruel rascal. He carried in his hand a short thick spear. One day I was sick of a fever and hardly knew what I did or whither I went. My feebleness made me lag, and not walk so fast as he would have me to do. He took his spear in both his hands and struck me violently between the shoulders with the butt, so that I fell down. He dragged me to my feet. I tottered on, and happily we were near the journey's end for that day, else it would have gone hard with me. The others he did misuse also, and used to shout, "*Marchad, marchad, Ingleses perrros, Luterianos, enemigos de Dios,*" by which he meant, "March on, you English dogs, Lutherans, enemies of God."

The older man had more pity, and let us bide two days in the next town, much against the will of

the younger, who said, "Let the Lutheran dogs die." The good old man gave us meat and fruit and water and fair lodging, and there the younger could not harm us. For the next four or five days we travelled by little villages and *estancias*, which are large Spanish farms with great quantities of cattle. At last we were told that we were not above fifteen English miles from the city of Mexico, whereat we rejoiced. We were utterly weary of our bonds and our journeyings. We longed for our freedom or a quick death, so that by any means we might be delivered. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" as the apostle Paul saith.

Within two leagues from the city we came upon a very fine church, in which was an image of our Lady, silver gilt, of full life-size. Before it there were so many silver lamps as there be days in the year. On high days and holy days these were all lit. No Spaniard that passes by, whether he be on horse or on foot, but goeth first into the church and prayeth to our Lady to defend him from all harm. They think that if they do not this they will not prosper. The image is called *Nuestra Señora de Guadeloupe*. We went into the church with our guard.

"Bow to the Holy Virgin, you dogs," said our young Spaniard hoarsely. Fry and Zachary Ellis would not, but stood upright, their stern faces set and grim. The rest of us made a bow, but did not turn away the wrath of our hated young Spanisher.

"Ah, stand, would ye," he snarled. "The rack will stretch and bend your stiff bodies! The thumbscrew will make you say your *Ave!*"

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon that we entered into the city by the street called *Le Calle Santa Catherina*. We stayed not until we were brought to the market-place and to the palace of the Governor, Don Martin Enriquez, who years ago at San Juan d'Ullua had so traitorously used Mr. Hawkins and all his men. The Spaniards in this city were filled with curiosity and wonder at us, but durst not give us aught for fear of being seen befriending us. We were taken by water in a large canoe to a house where we were lodged. It was a strong place, dark, and little better than a dungeon. We saw no man, save the jailer when he brought us meat and drink. Here we abode for several weeks.

"What will they do to us, Heard?" said Fry. "Shall we rot in these noisome holes forever and ever?"

"God knoweth. To each his lot as Fate shall send, and God be with us all."

One by one we were called before the Inquisitors, and severely examined of our faith. We had been separated in our prison, two only together in each cell, so that except for Fry, my companion, I knew not how the others fared. Fry was a very Protestant man, and I fear he fared ill at the examination. For me, I determined to say whatsoever should please them, so that by any means I should be got out of their hands. I was not the stuff of which martyrs are made, nephew Dick. I had not the courage.

There were three Inquisitors in the Court, likewise a secretary and an interpreter. After they had taken down my name and nation and birthplace,

my age and condition, the chief among them said, "Say now the *Pater Noster*, the *Ave Maria*, and the *Credo* in Latin." God knoweth I could not, but the interpreter, one Robert Bryer, the son of an Englishman and a Spanish woman, who so far as in him lay did stand out friend, said, "Say them to me in English." So I said the Our Father, and the Creed aloud. The interpreter told the Court that I could say them perfectly in my English speech, though not in the Latin. I told them not, that I had a little of the Spanish tongue. They made me swear to speak the truth. The Chief Inquisitor asked :

"What dost thou believe of the Sacrament of the Mass? After the words of consecration doth there remain bread and wine? Yea or No?"

"No," said I.

"Dost thou believe that the Host which the priest doth hold up over his head, and the wine in the chalice, be the very body and blood of our Saviour Christ? Yea or no?"

"Yea."

Had I answered no, I should have gone to the death.

"What opinions didst thou hold in England, and what wast thou taught there?"

To which I answered, for my life, that I had never believed, nor had been taught, otherwise than I said.

"Thou art not telling us the truth. We know the contrary. If thou dost not make a better answer next time, thou mayst be racked, and made to confess the truth, whether thou wilt or no. But if we

have the truth from thee, thou mayst be set at liberty. Go now. The prisoner is dismissed."

I knew well enough that this last was a trap. If I confessed to having had a different belief I would be convicted out of my own mouth. The next time I was before the Court I was again asked what I had learned in England. I made the same reply, adding that if I had unknowingly sinned or offended in England against God and our Lady or any of His blessed Saints, I was heartily sorry for the same, and did cry mercy from God and their worships the Inquisitors.

The stern faces of the Inquisitors did not relax. I knew not whether what I had said served me at all. Fry had stoutly affirmed his Protestant faith, and was in fear of the flames. He was forever praying in his cell, poor wretch, and I was ignorant of my fate. One day the jailer told us that a large scaffold had been built in the market square and that with trumpet and roll of drum the people had been assembled there. A proclamation had been read that whosoever upon such a day a fortnight hence did go to the market-place, they should hear the sentence of the Holy Inquisition against the English Lutheran heretics, and should see the same put into execution.

The night before this ordeal certain officers of that holy hellish Inquisition came to our prison-house, with six fool's coats for us to wear. They called them San Benitos. They were made of a piece of yellow cotton cloth with a hole in the middle, and were pulled over your head so that a flap hung

down before and behind. On each flap was sewed a Saint Andrew's cross made of red cloth, and for our heads were tall caps painted with devils and flames. We had little sleep that night. When the morning was come, each one of us was given a slice of bread fried in honey and a cup of wine for breakfast.

At about eight o'clock we were taken out of prison, each man between two Spaniards and in his yellow coat, with a rope around his neck, and a big green wax candle unlighted in his hand. We repaired to the church in the market-place. Here High Mass was said, or rather sung. In the sermon that a friar did preach, he said (so far as I could tell) that we were heretics seduced of the Devil. Mass done, we were marched to the scaffold, with difficulty, owing to the press of people. The crowd seemed to me to be curious rather than full of hate or anger, as they pushed and swayed to and fro. Eager questing faces, white, yellow, and brown, some smooth, some bearded; and a murmur arose like the voices of the sea. Mounted men made a way for us, and we went up steps to the scaffold. Here we found seats ready for us to sit and hear our sentence. I was trembling with fear, and so (I think) were we all, but we determined to hold up our heads and behave worthily, as good Englishmen. Up came the Inquisitors on to the scaffold, then the Viceroy and his council under the awning, with many friars, black, white, and grey.

A trumpet sounded, and a solemn hush fell upon all that vast multitude. I looked out over the thousands of upturned faces, still and glistening in the

hot sunshine. Far off across the great square where the eddies of dust were whirling I thought I saw a heap of something. Faggots! Sick at heart, I stole a glance at Fry. Drops of sweat were on his face, his lips were moving. The herald began to read in the Spanish tongue. His voice was loud, but it sounded thin in that immense space.

"Zachary Ellis. To have two hundred stripes on horseback, and thereafter to be committed to the galleys for six years.

"William Woodbine. To have one hundred stripes on horseback, and thereafter to be committed to the galleys for four years.

"John Chudley. To have one hundred stripes on horseback, and thereafter to be committed to the galleys for three years.

"Peter Polruan. To be committed to the galleys for three years.

"Jonathan Heard. To serve in a monastery for three years, and to wear a San Benito all that time.

"James Fry. To be burnt to ashes.

Fry understood. He fell forward in a faint. The Inquisitors' officers lifted him and bore him down through the crowd which made way for them to the great heap across the square. As I gazed with pity and horror, the fire flared up, so quick and hot that he could not have suffered long.

We were carried back to the prison. The next day in the morning all the rest of us were brought to

the courtyard of the palace of the Holy Office, where there were three horses for those condemned to stripes. Naked from the waist upwards, they were forced to mount. In procession through the streets they rode, we other two on foot behind them. The executioners laid on the stripes with long whips, and in front went two criers who called out, "Behold these English heretic dogs, God's enemies." When the victims of this torture returned to the house of the Holy Office, their backs were all swollen and a mass of blood. After they had recovered, I suppose that they went to the galleys. I never saw them again. I was straightway sent to a religious house to labour in my San Benito, having been, God forgive me, a more successful liar than the rest. Saving Fry, who told the truth, and saint-like, suffered in the flames.

CHAPTER VI

ESCAPE

HERE in this religious house I was not hardly used. I was appointed to be overseer of Indian workmen, engaged in the building of a new church for the Black Friars, who were my new masters. During the time I worked here, I came to know the Spanish tongue perfectly, and also learnt the Mexican speech of the Indians. This was a gentle people, and an intelligent. They hated and abhorred the Spaniards with all their hearts, for they said the Spaniards had used them cruelly, and with the negroes also they are still kept in subjection. It is in nature that these should serve the white men, but their masters are over-harsh. God knoweth, perhaps we were harsh in tearing the negroes from their homes.

I must needs confess that the friars did use me very well. I had a little room to myself, with bedding and everything clean and neat, and good food also. It is true that many Spaniards, and even many of the friars themselves, loathed and feared that cruel Inquisition, and would have done more for us had they dared. That same Inquisition would have them by the heels with the least excuse in the world. I served the full three years of my sentence, and I thank God I was not unhappy, though I always had a longing and a desire for my native land. After my time had expired, I was brought again before the

'Drake Was My Captain

chief Inquisitor. My fool's coat was pulled off and
 hanged up in the church with this inscription :

JONATHAN HEARD
 A LUTHERAN HERETIC
 RECONCILED

I saw hanging up there another coat, and below
 it :

JAMES FRY
 AN OBSTINATE LUTHERAN HERETIC
 BURNT

So I was free, yet not free. For there were spies
 all about ready to trap me again, watching all my
 actions and hearkening to my lightest speech.

Yet did I not remain alone. I was walking one
 day in the street when, not looking where I was
 going, I by accident jostled a tall, grizzle-bearded
 man, and trod heavily upon his foot. I was about to
 crave his pardon, when I heard him swear in Eng-
 lish. My heart leapt up to hear that good speech
 once more.

"Thy pardon if I have hurt thy foot," I said in
 English.

The man stared. "Who be you?" he gasped.

"Jonathan Heard's my name, of Topsham, in
 Devonshire. I was shipwrecked on the coast three
 or four years ago. Be you one of Captain
 Hawkins' men?"

"Yes, yes. Paul Horswell, in the *Minion*. I've

been to the galleys, but I'm a good Catholic now." He looked round fearfully, and crossed himself. He continued in Spanish: "Were you in that voyage, perchance?"

"Aye, with Captain Drake, in the *Judith*."

"El Draques! The Dragon, they call him here." He lowered his voice and said:

"Hast thou heard of his great doings on the Main and at Nombre de Dios? Yes? Where is he now?"

"Nay, I know not. But I saw him when he came home back along to Plymouth."

"Plymouth! I know it well, though I'm a Bristol man myself. Good old West Country! I shall never see it again, never more. I'm married here, you must know."

We were walking together, and he said that his house was quite near by. Would I come in?

"My wife is the daughter of a Spanish gentleman and an Indian woman. He came over with Cortez the Conquistador, and his daughter brought me three thousand pesos and yon house."

We entered, and I was presented to his wife, a dark flashing-eyed creature, somewhat fat, but pleasant withal. I went there again, though not often, for fear of awakening suspicion which might ruin us both.

Meanwhile, I had to find something to live by. If I could be appointed as an overseer in the mines, that way lay wealth and prosperity, but having been a Lutheran, as they call it, I was forever suspect. So soon as I made money, I might fall again into the hands of the Inquisition, and be stripped

of all. Although I was to all seeming a true Catholic and attended regularly at their Mass, once in their clutches I might be made out to be a Protestant again, and so lose my life as well. I had better take more humble employment, so it seemed to me. I therefore bound myself for a term of years apprentice to a silk weaver, and thus abode quietly in the city.

The city of Mexico was very great and populous. There were at least five thousand Spanish householders, and in the outskirts Indians to the number of half a million. It standeth high, about half-way between the Northern Sea and the Southern, by a great lake, and in a wide plain. Far off are huge mountains, covered with snow, and smoking. The market-square is a good bowshot across, and in it is the church. Round about are many fair houses. In one, where aforetime was King Montezuma, then abode the Viceroy. In another the bishop dwelt, and many others are there which were built by Fernando Cortez. The city has broad, long, straight streets, and a canal right up to the market-place. Indian canoes arrived each morning with all manner of provision for the city. Beef, mutton, and fowls are all cheap, as are bread and fruits. The weather is always fair and temperate. It is indeed a very pleasant place wherein to dwell, though subject to earthquakes, which sometimes throw down houses and kill the people. There are many monasteries and nunneries. Since the year 1570 there had been a great traffic in papal bulls, by which pardons were sold to both Spaniards and Indians to deliver

the souls of themselves and their dead out of so many years' purgatory. The Church got great riches by this means at first, but not so much in later times, for the people came to be weary of it.

Although I lived quietly with the silk weaver, the agents of the Holy Office were ever watchful. One accosted me in the street, and said :

"Englishman, 'tis said you mean to run away to England, and become a Lutheran again."

"Señor," I replied, "you have no reason for saying this. Moreover, thou knowest I cannot by any means escape."

He seemed but little satisfied, and I was haled once more before the Inquisitor. To my surprise he demanded why I did not marry. I replied that I had bound myself apprentice.

"Well," said the Inquisitor, "we know thou meanest to run away. Therefore we charge thee, on pain of burning as a heretic relapsed, that thou go not out of this city."

"I willingly obey," said I, cold fear gripping my heart.

"Yes," went on the Inquisitor sternly, "see thou do so. And thy fellow Englishmen in this place shall have the like charge."

Yet it fell out that soon I did go from thence. There was great news. The whole city was thrown into a panic on hearing that Captain Drake, the Dragon, was at the port of Acapulco, on the South Sea. How had he come there? His master the Devil had brought him. He had spoiled the ships and towns wherever he had gone. He would fly over to

Mexico and ruin us all. So spake the townsfolk gathered in fear in the square. The Viceroy caused to be made a muster of those Spaniards and half-breeds capable of bearing arms, in all thirty thousand men; but how they were to fight the Dragon scores of leagues away upon the sea I knew not.

Paul Horsewell and I were summoned before the Viceroy. There were guards armed with halberds all the way up the steps. Halberdiers stood beside us and behind the Viceroy, as dark and stern he sat in his chair in the audience chamber.

"You must tell me," said he, "if you know an Englishman named Francis Drake. We believe him to be brother to Captain Hawkins."

I answered: "Captain Hawkins hath only one brother, a man of over fifty years, and a leading citizen of Plymouth in England."

"Do you know one Francis Drake?" the Viceroy repeated angrily.

"No, señor," we said both together.

"Go!" commanded the Viceroy, and we went.

Some eight hundred men were picked from the levy, and were well armed. They were sent to divers ports on the South Sea, and two hundred went to Acapulco. To my delight I was appointed interpreter for this company, if we should take any English prisoners, and had licence from the Inquisitor to leave the city. The captain of these men was Don Robles Alcalde de Corte. When we arrived at Acapulco, we found that Captain Drake had departed a month since, but Don Robles was so eager to take him that he embarked in a small ship of

about threescore tons, with two other small barks. With these and two hundred men and me as his interpreter he set out to scour the seas. The ships were weak and ill-gunned. I rejoiced to think that if we did meet my little captain he would assuredly take us all, and I would be half-way home. Home!

We ran south'ard along the coast towards Panama for three weeks, seeing nothing, and returned to Acapulco. During the last part of the voyage the sea was rough. Don Robles' men were all sick and helpless. He was compelled to put them ashore, and the ship was none too staunch besides. I had to land also, whereat I was much grieved, for my hopes of home were gone. I had to keep my sorrow to myself, and outwardly make fair weather of it. So we returned to Mexico City. Don Robles reported to the Viceroy that Captain Drake had vanished, but the Viceroy said, "We shall get him yet. He cannot get out of those seas, and hunger will drive him to land." They little knew my captain. The Viceroy ordered me not to leave the city on any account, but to hold myself in readiness at my master's house at an hour's notice. The terror of El Draques abated, and this order was soon forgotten.

It came to pass that certain Spaniards were about to journey to their *estancias* some fifty miles away, to despatch parcels of hides from thence to the coast. My master wished me to pick up some raw silk from a town near the *estancias*, and obtained permission from the secretary of the Inquisition to send me. So off I went, with a good horse. At the *estancia* news came that the Plate fleet was ready to sail for Spain.

I was only three days' journey from the port of San Juan d'Ullua, and thought I saw an opportunity for escape. If I could get away and enlist for a soldier on-board of the fleet, I would have a passage into Spain; I never doubted that I could make my way to England from thence. I would not go as a gunner, for too many questions might be asked. As a soldier there would be nothing said that I could not easily answer.

I stole out that same night. The moon shone bright, and I saddled my horse without waking any of the Indians that lay about the house. As I clattered out of the courtyard a dog barked, but I rode hard for half an hour before reining up. I was clear away. The Spaniards would only think that I had gone off on my proper business of the silk. I had no fear of pursuits, but I wanted no questionings. I pressed on for two days and nights, resting my horse when necessary. On the evening of the second day, my horse and myself being very weary, I came to Vera Cruz (which is in English "True Cross"), about fifteen miles from San Juan d'Ullua. I thought to rest here, but no sooner had I dismounted than a curious throng of idlers gathered round and stared at my spent horse. I answered their foolish chatter curtly enough, but before I had come to an inn, the little crowd parted and four armed men closed round me.

"You are under arrest, señor," said their leader.

"But why, why?" I demanded.

"You know well enough, señor. You are arrested at the instance of your father."

"My father's—dead," I cried.

"He might well be, of grief," replied the officer. "You must come with me."

After a miserable night in a prison I was brought before the justices. There was a great hurly-burly about the matter. Two men I had never before seen witnessed that I was the son of Señor Juan Cifuentes, a merchant of Mexico, and had run away after robbing this my father. I stoutly denied it, swearing that I knew not the man, had never seen him. It was of no avail, the justices would not believe me. "To prison with him," they said. There was a press of people in the court-house, and from the midst of them came a voice, "Señors, señors, you are doing this man wrong. He is not the man you seek."

"Stop!" said the chief magistrate. "Bring that man up here. Now then, since you know so much, who is he?"

The speaker was a poorly dressed fellow, carrying a basket of squawking hens, which he set down firmly in front of him. He smiled at me, thinking he was doing me a service. I feared greatly what he would say.

"This man is no Spaniard at all, señors. (Be quiet, you clucking spawn of Satan!) He is an Englishman." An Englishman! I groaned. The crowd buzzed excitedly.

"Silence!" roared an usher.

"You lie," said the magistrate calmly. "How do you know? I can see you are his accomplice in the crime. Have a care, or you will be arrested also."

"I lie not," affirmed the man. "He is an Englishman, a shipwrecked Englishman. I have seen him often with the Black Friars of Santiago in Mexico. He wore the San Benito for three or four years, but he is now reconciled to Holy Church. He is a man of good character. His name is Heard, not Cifuentes at all."

The wretched man had spoken to clear me, but had made matters far worse.

"Does this fellow speak truth?" asked the magistrate. I could not deny it.

"Why are you here? Is it because the fleet is sailing?"

Again a denial was useless. I was committed to prison, and now I was in extreme danger. Gyves were clapped upon my legs, and there I abode for the space of three weeks, in company with sundry criminals and men condemned to the galleys. The prison was a hellish place, dark, full of despair, and of cockroaches big as my toe. But there was a captive there, a pock-marked man of the poorer sort, who had known me in Mexico City. His first name was Juan.

"Englishman, Englishman," he said, hoarsely whispering, "they say you are English!"

"So they say," I replied cautiously.

"Oh, have you forgot, as I have not, you gave me a good coat, away in the city? I am in for a trifle, next to nothing, nothing at all, but it will be the galleys for me if I do not break free. Listen. Softly now. I have been in this jail for many months, I know not how many, but at last I have a friend

outside who brings me wine and victuals to the grating. We will see what will befall."

Seven days later he came up close and sat beside me on the dirty floor, with monstrous spiders scuttling all around.

"Look, Englishman. These have come, as I asked, cunningly hidden in a loaf of bread. Files! Two of them, and well-made they are. One is for you. It cost me two pesos. Hast thou two pesos? Thanks. My friend saith that you are to be sent back to Mexico City in a mule-cart, so soon as the fleet hath sailed for Spain."

I embraced Juan joyfully, and hid the file cunningly inside my left boot against my leg. I know not what became of Juan, whether he escaped or went to the galleys. I prayed that he would avoid that fate, which I, even I, had undergone. Three or four days later I was sent for, handcuffed, and lifted into a cart by myself. It was one of a great convoy of sixty wagons, bearing unto Mexico the merchandise landed from the Spanish fleet, and it so happened mine was the leading wagon of the convoy.

As soon as we were fairly started, I made shift to get my hands out of the manacles, and as God would, though it was painful, yet could I slip my hands through and put them in again. This gave me fresh hope, and I fell to filing of my leg irons, whenever the sound was deadened by the creaking of the wagon wheels, the noise of hooves and the bells and the shouts of the muleteers.

About five and twenty miles from Vera Cruz we

came to the foot of a high hill. There it so happened that a wheel of my wagon broke. Then flowed torrents of Spanish oaths and much calling upon their saints, which had no effect that I could see. An Indian carpenter was set to work to mend it, and from being first we came to be last, for all the other wagons went on afore. The hill in front was very long and steep withal. Four mule-teams were needed to haul each heavily laden cart. So I thought my time would come when my sweating muleteers were absent, helping to haul up the carts in front, cracking their whips and cursing.

So it fell out. Evening was drawing on before the last few came to be dragged uphill. By that time I had filed through my fetters, save for an iron collar about my neck. As soon as it was dark, and when the men had gone uphill with their teams, I slipped out of the wagon, dashed for the woods beside the track, and hid there for the night. My irons I threw into a thick bush, and I ate a few biscuits before falling asleep.

I steered south by the sun at daybreak next morning, through the thick woods. The very same forenoon I fell in with a party of Indians hunting deer. I was right glad that I knew the Mexican tongue, for I spun them a yarn that I had long been a prisoner in the hands of the Spaniards (whom they hated), and would they help me file off my collar? They did so willingly, saying that they rejoiced I had escaped, and that they would guide me out of that desert place to a town towards the south. Their guide brought me to an Indian village about

twoscore miles away, where I abode for three days, having a touch of fever. Before leaving the *estancia* I had sewn some gold coins in the quilting of my doublet, and with six pesos of this money I bought a horse.

Southward now again. Before I had gone very far I happened to overtake a Grey Friar. Him I had known in Mexico City. He was a straightforward man, and I felt I could trust him. Like many another, in secret he hated the Inquisition.

"Father," I said, "I am minded to leave this country if I can get shipping unto Spain. Give me your advice. Which is the safest way to go?"

"Son," he replied, "I will myself take you to Guatemala on the South Sea, and from thence you should hire Indian guides. They will bring you across to the Northern Sea to Puerto Caballos."

So for several days I rode with the good friar. At night we were entertained at the Indians' houses. In the morning he would make a collection of money from the Indians, sometimes as much as twenty pesos, all of which he would afterward freely give to me. I parted from him at a monastery near to Guatemala.

"I bid your farewell with deep gratitude, Father, for all your help, good counsel, and money. I pray you, give me your blessing." He was pleased thereat, and so did.

It was said to be a long and lonely journey to Caballos. I hired guides, therefore, and bought mutton, fruit and bread. I did not forget flint and steel to make fires withal, to dress our meat and to keep

away wild beasts. Every night the Indians made two blazing fires. We and my horse camped between the fires, and all night long the pumas, leopards, and other great cats ranged about and around, their eyes gleaming in the light of the flames.

It took us twelve days to reach Puerto Caballos, where I dismissed my two guides. I went straight-way down to the harbour, and found some Spanish ships unloading Canary wine. I spoke to the master of one.

"Where were you born?" he asked. "You're a long lean fellow."

"I come from Granada," I replied.

"Granada!" said he. "Do you know Almeria? My native town."

"Not very well. I'm a Malaga man myself."

"A Malaga man, eh? Hi, Pedro," he shouted, "here's a man from Malaga."

Pedro, the master of the vessel alongside, was luckily a surly fellow.

"Don't know him," he growled, and spat into the water.

"It is you I want," I said hastily. "Can you give me a passage into Spain? I will pay, of course."

"Oh yes, señor. Of course you have some passport or letter to show." He laughed. "You see, you may have killed somebody, or be in debt. I do not wish to be shot at for aiding your escape."

"There is nothing of that sort about me. I can pay, also. What say you to twenty-five pesos for the voyage?"

"Couldn't do it for anything under eighty."

He hoisted me up, and I beat him down, and in the end we agreed upon sixty pesos. I quickly sold my horse, bought some victuals and wine, and embarked.

We had a fair run to Havana, and here was the whole fleet of Spain, homeward bound. There was a great buzz and chatter about English pirates, and going ashore I found myself pressed for a soldier to serve in the admiral ship, wherein was the general himself. It mattered not, I thought. All roads led to Spain. There were no less than thirty-seven ships to this mighty fleet, with great store of treasure, silver and gold, sugar, hides, and rare drugs. In all this array only two ships, the admiral and the vice-admiral, were in any way warlike and well-appointed. The rest were so ill-gunned and ill-manned that three or four tall stout English ships would have made havoc with the whole armada, or so I thought at the time. For nigh on three weary months we were at sea, with very contrary winds.

One day as I was doing sentry duty just below the quarter-deck, I saw a man whose face I thought I knew, speaking to the captain of the soldiers. My ears being quick, I caught the word "Englishman." This put me on my guard. A week later we arrived at Terceira in the Azores. The most part put in for leave to go ashore. When my turn came the captain of the soldiers said to me, "No, you do not go ashore here, you wait till we reach Seville." I knew full well what he meant. He meant to denounce me to the Holy Office. I answered pleasantly enough and let

no one see what I suspected, but it was clear that something had to be done.

I had noted a ship of about sixty tons lying near by with a Saint Andrew's cross to her mainmast, and the lion rampant of Scotland at her stern. I thought to myself that if I could get aboard her I should be reasonably safe, especially if her master were a Protestant, as was likely. Most of my comrades were ashore, and that night, when the rest were asleep, I slipped through a porthole, being so lean as a hank of rope, and plunged into the sea. I had stripped as naked as I was born, the better to do my long swim, and I carried my purse tied to my wrist and held in my hand. Happily the moon was shining and I could not lose my way. I clung on to the Scotlander's mooring-rope, and bided awhile to get my breath again. Then I hailed her. The watchman came to the side, looked over, and said something. "Throw me a rope, good sirs," I cried. A rope's end splashed into the sea and I was hauled aboard. The watch smiled broadly as I emerged from the sea, naked and dripping and carrying my purse.

"I am an Englishman," I said, "escaped from one of they Spanish ships. Please to give me a blanket."

They did not seem to understand one word of good Devonshire speech, save only "Englishman," and of what they said to me I only had a few words. Nevertheless, they received me very courteously, giving me a rug-cloak and letting me lie down in the waist of the ship, which it seemed was named *Hawk*. The morrow morn I was given a shirt and a pair of seaman's breeches. I asked if the master was

aboard. They understood that, and I was brought along, still gripping my purse, to the master's cabin.

"I am an Englishman, sir," said I, "Jonathan Heard by name, and a believer in the true religion. I had been shipwrecked in the Indies, and was working my passage home, when this last night some of the Spanish soldiers, being drunk, tried to rob me, but I escaped, carrying my purse with me. I would fain buy a passage back to England."

The Scottish master was a man of middle height, very strong and well made, with a fair beard, his head nearly bald, and a round face and twinkling eyes. He had a habit of saying "eh, eh" between his words.

"Young man," he said, "I'll no' believe your story. Ye speak of the true religion. If ye were a Catholic, ye had naught to fear, and, eh, ye must have committed some wrongdoing. I must give ye up. If ye are a Protestant, which I suspect, ye are, eh, eh, trying to cheat the Holy Office, and I canna ha' that. Eh, but I do no' believe your tale of robbery at all."

I understood the drift of what he was saying. I had been watching his manner closely, and decided to take a chance.

"I am as true a Protestant as yourself, sir, and indeed this is the third time I have escaped from their hellish Inquisition."

"Why did ye no' say that at first, young man? Lying is a grievous sin. How much can ye pay? Have ye got ten pesos? If I take ye for, eh, as little as that, ye'll have to work."

The *Hawk's* master was also her captain. His name was Robert Bell. It was not long before I became used to his strange speech, and we talked much together. I cannot mimic him well for you, Dick. He would say fu'st for first, wu'k for work, for lying something like leeihg, and thart for that. He used many strange words besides, as lug for an ear, and bairn for a child. I know not whether he called his tongue English or Scots, but it was not English as we have it in Devonshire. Nor is the London talk either, as I have told you.

He told me that Scotland is the finest country in the world. This doth not seem easy to believe, for by his own showing it is a small country and a poor one. The northern half (so he said) is inhabited by wild savages, which hide among their lakes and mountains, save when they come out to plunder. They are a very proud and thievish race, and speak a tongue that even Captain Bell did not understand. They wear a single garment called a klibeg, which leaves their knees bare, and they have a neighing sort of music which they make from a bagpipe. The southern half of this strange land hath some good tillage, but where it neareth the English border it becomes very barren, full of heather. The Scots eat a thick grey broth made of oatmeal, which they like much. I had some, and suffered no harm.

Captain Robert Bell was bound for his home port, Leith, near to Edinburgh. We had bad weather and a contrary gale, but rough winds in time bring ships to safe road. When we put in to Falkmouth, I parted from my Scottish captain, whom I well liked. He was

shrewd, kindly, and wise, and ruled his crew in proper fashion.

In the end Captain Bell would not take the ten pesos for my passage, and thus I was not quite so penniless as usual when I landed. I made my way on foot to Plymouth, where, as you may expect, I repaired in haste to Mr. Prowse's. A cold autumn rain was falling. I was sure that Margaret would have been married long ere this, but I wished to see if she had changed much. Perhaps I had a faint hope that she might be my dear Margaret still. Vain, in vain. The house and bakery were all boarded up. I knocked at the next house. The door was opened by a man I did not know.

"Good day. Can you please tell me whither Mr. Prowse has gone?"

"Mr. Prowse, young sir, is with the Lord, I trust. He and his family and apprentices, all of them, died of the plague last year. About four hundred altogether perished in this town. Aye, 'twas a terrible time, sure enough."

Oh, I could not speak for a moment. "*Requiem æternam . . .*" I began, but checked myself.

"Was his daughter married?"

"No. I did hear she were waiting for a young man they said was lost at sea. You be home from sea, perhaps?"

My heart was too full for further speech. I came on here, home once more, after many years.

CHAPTER VII

AMERICA

THERE were great changes here at home. My poor mother had died of the stone two years before. My father suffered from pains in his groin that came on more and more often; he looked very ill. My brothers were charged with the cider business, for my father took but little part in it. Your aunt Margery had married her farmer over to Budleigh.

I was made welcome, and folks in the town were very kind. Yet I had returned from the outer seas penniless once more, and would have to be off again soon. I was a rolling stone in those days, and could not be long content ashore. If I could have found Captain Drake I would have contrived to go with him, for gold had a way of sticking to his fingers, but he had been away for more than two years, and God alone knew what had become of him. There were rumours that he had burst through to the South Sea and had spoiled the Spaniards there, to the truth of which I could testify, but nothing more had been seen or heard of him. I went to Plymouth, with a new fiddle, ready to sail in any venture that needed a gunner, in the month of November 1579.

Within a week of my appearing in Plymouth, there came into harbour a ship of London that had sailed from Harwich and was called the *Prudence*,

of about one hundred and twenty tons. I have had great misfortune at sea in my life, but this day was prosperous. The ship was bound for Brazil to trade, and had not been able to obtain a skilled master-gunner in Harwich, the man who had signed on having fallen sick of the smallpox. I was down to the quay so soon as she was in. The first person I met was the ship's purser, a Mr. Grigs, who told me of the lack of a gunner. I went aboard, saw the master, and being by now experienced at sea and knowing my craft, was appointed master-gunner for the voyage.

The venture was in the names of Mr. Anthony Garrard, Mr. Christopher Hoddesdon, and other well-known merchants of the City of London. They were trading with an Englishman dwelling in Santos in Brazil. This Englishman had written to the Lord Mayor to ask for a ship to bring him merchandise, in exchange for which he would load her with fine sugar from his *ingênio*, for so they call their sugar factories. I learnt this from Mr. Grigs the purser, who showed me the bills of lading, and the manifest. It was a mixed cargo. Scissors and knives, tinned dishes, Venetian glass, fish-hooks, locks, axes, nails and oakum; canvas doublets, coloured Manchester cotton, hats, shirts, kersey, linen; divers sorts of merchandise we had, not forgetting copper cauldrons for the sugar *ingenios*, and a bed in walnut with canopy and hangings as a present for the merchant. I remember well the nature of the cargo, because it was so seldom that I had a chance of seeing the bills.

The wind continuing fair, we did not tarry in Plymouth, and soon we were away on the long sea road again. Darkness fell as we slipped out into the Sound, and the shore lights glittered and flashed through the rain. Soon, ah soon, we should see the fireflies in the can-brakes, the yellow-golden moon, the stars glowing so near that it seemed we could snatch them from the sky, and our wake all green fire.

"Give us a tune on your fiddle, Mr. Heard," some of the men would say, as the *Prudence* gently lifted to the long Atlantic swell.

"Where'd I put 'n to?" I would reply, but it was never far away. Soon I would have them singing. The ship's music, a viol and an hautboy, would join in, and the trumpeter would come along and bray also. It was in this ship that we first had the *hamaco*, an Indian swing-bed made of netting that you hanged up with two hooks, one at each end. The first time that ever I did get into one, I incontinently fell out.

We touched at the port of St. Vincent in the Canaries for a few days. Here we sold many of our kerseys, and laded inboard fifteen tuns of Canary wine for the account of our Englishmar in Santos. I bought one of they little green birds in a wicker cage. He did sing marvellously. Then for weeks we sailed over an endless waste of sea which turned from emerald to violet and blue as the light changed. With the blown spray came in the flying fish, and the stripe-bellied bonito leaping after them. Both by day and by night the fish would fly into our sails,

and so be taken. We would put one upon a hook trailing in the water and by it catch a bonito.

Spring-time would just have been beginning in Devonshire when we arrived at the island of Santa Catalina, near to the entrance to Santos. We anchored at nine fathoms in black oozy ground. Palm-trees there were in plenty on the island, but not a drop of fresh water. We had therefore to wait till we came into Santos, where the first thing we did was to set up our smith's forge on land, get going ovens to bake our biscuit, and make a space for our coopers to trim the water-casks, which we filled. We were well received by the Governor and the King's officers, and indeed by all the Portugals, and had no difficulty about revictualling or the unloading of our merchandisc. Our Englishman, who was married in the country, came aboard us and expressed himself well satisfied with all that we had brought in. We loaded his sugars into the ship.

We abode at Santos nigh on three months. While we were there many of our men had devices painted on their bodies by the Indians. This anchor on my right arm was thus done. It is not very like an anchor, but it was the best that my Indian could do. He pricked the skin with a thorn till the blood flowed and then rubbed in charcoal. It cometh up black on the Indians' brown hide, but on a white man it appeareth blue as you see.

One day the Governor of Santos came aboard the *Prudence*, and asked to see the captain, Mr. Luke Endicott. They were closeted together for a while in the cabin, and then the Captain sent for me. "Mr.

Heard," said he, "the Governor tells me that four French ships of war have sailed into the harbour of Rio de Janeiro. They were beaten off by the forts, but he expects that they will pay Santos a visit. There are no forts here. He wants to know if he may borrow some artillery and powder. What can we do for him?"

"Well, sir," I replied, "we cannot let him have any of our heavy ordnance, for if the Frenchmen come along, it is likely enough we shall need all we have."

"Just what I told him," said the Captain. "Can we lend him any lighter stuff?"

"I could spare say twenty calivers and two barrels of powder. They'm no use against ships' guns, but you could give a landing-party a warm welcome with them."

"A thousand thanks, friends," said the Governor, and went overside to his boat.

I thought we might be in for a very pretty action, but four days later two Indian canoes appeared with the report that the four Frenchmen had gone south, and we did not see or hear of them again. Howbeit, we had proved our friendship to the Governor.

We began to make provision for our departure. We caught a good store of fish, took in fresh victuals and water, cut wood for our galley fires, and removed the barnacles from the *Prudence's* bottom. She was so green as grass, and we scraped her. When all was finished, we set sail for England with a favouring gale, which bore us safely and speedily

home. Past the white cliffs and the green shores we sailed, till we rounded the Forelands and came into the river of Thames, where in Barking Creek we stayed. Our cargo of sugar was taken into London. So ended a peaceful voyage. I could wish more of my travellings had been so profitable. There was no prize-money, but good wages promptly paid. This time I did not return with my hands quite empty, but my fortune was still to seek.

I went to see Mr. John Hawkins to his house in Mincing Lane, not very far from the Tower of London. He was not much changed. He was older, 'tis true, and thinner in the face, and lines of care were round his eyes. He had been for years the Treasurer of the Queen's Navy. I warrant he kept a tight hold on the purse-strings, and that dishonest contractors felt the sharp and bitter edge of his tongue. Men said that the ships and stores had never had such careful provision as at the hands of John Hawkins. He had just returned by water from Deptford when I was brought into his office. He was wearing a ruff and a high-crowned hat. He gave me a warm West-country welcome in his hearty sailor fashion, and talked to me in good Devonshire speech.

"So 'tis Heard, of Topsham. Well, my boy, you'm back again. Where've ye been to this time? Brazil, hey? And how did ye fare with they Portugals? Yes, I've been told of your doings to Mexico. Met some of my men, I hear. God forgive me, I never went back for them. I was tied by the leg in England, but they were scattered all abroad. I should

never have found them. Aye, but they were bad days at San Juan. You've heard that Francis Drake is back-along home again? It is all over the City. He've sailed the world and salted the Dons, they say. The Queen knoweth not what to do wi' un, but she'll have 'n up here, sure enough. His ship is ba' lasted with silver bars. Eh, 'tis good to use and hear plain Devonshire talk again. Give ye work in the dockyard? Indeed I will. Take boat with me at eight o'clock on Monday morning, and we'll find you plenty to do."

Mr. Hawkins kept his word. I soon found myself checking contractors' supplies, especially of ordnance, powder, and shot. Those dealing with the victuals had the hardest task, for there was great villainy here. The ropes, sails, and such-like were less difficult, and the guns—well, we had to be careful, but the ironmasters were honest and put good work into their wares. The guns were cast in the foundries of East Sussex and the Kentish borders, and one Mr. John Collins made us particularly good pieces. I worked for Mr. Hawkins for nigh on four years.

There were great doings at Deptford before I had been there long. Mr. Drake brought the old weather-worn *Pelican*, now named *Golden Hind*, up the Thames to Deptford Creek, where the little River Ravensbourne empties itself into London River. We heard his guns salute the Queen's Majesty as he passed Greenwich Palace, and amid the cheers of great crowds he brought his craft alongside the quay just within the entrance to the creek. He was

closeted with Mr. Hawkins for hours, and behind the office door went on a murmur of talk and laughter. I saw him many times during the next few months. He was often between London and Deptford. The dockyard cleaned up the *Golden Hind*, giving her new paint and gilding and tricking her out bravely. It became clear that something was afoot.

On a cloudy April day in 1581, the Queen came aboard. Since before dawn thousands of Londoners had been journeying on horse and on foot through Southwark and Rotherhithe, and thousands more were coming by water. Never had the watermen enjoyed such a harvest. Every barge and every skiff on the river was hired and was crammed with people, coming down with the tide. The *Golden Hind* was a brave sight, with the Tudor house flag at her stern, the cross of Saint George at her maintop, and banners and streamers from all possible points fluttering in the breeze. I put off with some companions in one of the dockyard boats, and lay off the mouth of the creek. A banquet was spread on deck beneath an awning and screened from the wind, with costly dishes and gold plate. The French Ambassador came by water, as did also the Spanish Ambassador, whose swarthy face was set and grim. He liked not this entertainment.

Boom, boom, boom, went the guns down the river. Now in the distance could be seen coming up with the new flood a stately gilded barge, gay with flags and banners. "The Queen! The Queen!" flew from boat to boat, and from lip to lip through the rustling, excited crowd on shore. With a long, easy stroke the

rowers brought the barge alongside the *Hind*, where she was made fast, the rowers uplifting their oars, the dripping blades gleaming. Slowly the Queen rose to her feet, with her ladies round her. She wore a magnificent dress of cloth of gold shining bright with pearls, a high ruff, and diamonds in her hair. Sir Walter Raleigh was there, in a slashed doublet and rich cloak. So also was Sir Christopher Hatton. This courtier was a youngish man, inclined to grow fat, as indeed he so did in after-years. He had a short, pointed fair beard, a deep ruff, and an open fur-tipped cloak. There was also an elderly man with a grey beard in dark clothes, who I was told was my Lord Burghley.

A step-ladder was let down to the barge from the *Golden Hind*, and Sir Christopher Hatton, the Captain of the Guard, took the Queen's hand and assisted her up the steps to the waist of the ship. Frankie Drake stood hat in hand, his sturdy figure fitting tight the most gorgeous 'aiment I had ever seen upon him. His ruff looked as if it might choke him. He bowed low in welcome, and I feared his points would break. Her Majesty looked round approvingly, said something to one of her ladies, smiled, and hand in hand with Mr. Drake ascended to the upper deck. She took her seat at the table, and pages flew to do her bidding.

She dined out of earshot, but in full view of the thousands afloat and ashore. From the crowd came snatches of women's talk.

"Don't she look *beautiful*! Look at 'er pearls! I wonder what that stomacher cost? A pretty fortune,

I'll be bound. What's that she's eating, Jane? Looks like unripe apples. They're steaming hot. Some fancy dish from the Indies, p'r'aps. What do you reckon that wine is? Canary? Something special out of Portugal? They say the Queen loves beer of a great strength, and an abundance of it, God bless 'er!

The eyes of all were upon the Queen's Majesty, and upon the famous men at the table, not least on Mr. Drake himself, who sat at the Queen's right hand as if to the manner born. I would have given much to have heard something of what was said at that banquet. Mr. Drake was talking eagerly, the Queen was listening gravely and seriously, but ever and anon breaking into a laugh. The French Ambassador and my Lord Burghley seemed uncomfortable, the Spanish Ambassador looked black, but all else was festive and happy.

Over the crowded foreshore and the grey river a drizzle of rain began to fall. The tables were cleared, and the Queen sat with her ladies and courtiers around her. In stately fashion she rose. She beckoned. A man came forward, and on one knee offered her a naked sword; the jewelled hilt flashed as she weighed the weapon in her hand. She beckoned again, and Mr. Drake advanced a few paces in front of her and bowed low. She motioned him to kneel. Still holding the sword, she spoke to him. A thrill passed through the crowds. What was she going to do? She turned to the French Ambassador, handing him the sword. He started in surprise, looked at it a thought reluctantly. Then smiling he

took a pace forward and smote Frankie Drake upon the shoulder with the flat. She had made him dub Drake Knight!

A gasp of delight came from the crowd, then cheer after cheer. The Spanish Ambassador stood forth pale with rage. He spoke rapidly, pointed to Sir Francis, who had arisen, then flung wide his hands. The Queen gripped the arms of her chair. Half-rising, she uttered a few words in reply, fierce words too, by the look of her face. The Ambassador bowed, slung his cloak around his shoulders, and, holding his head high, passed down the ladder, his sword clattering behind him, step by step. He called for his boat and was rowed away, the crowd silently watching him go.

Her Majesty made ready to return to Greenwich. All the people shouted as the dockyard battery fired a farewell salute, and she descended to her barge. The sun scattered the shreds of grey cloud and shone out of a blue-and-white sky on to the sparkling water. The *Golden Hind* manned ship, and the crew cheered again and again as the State barge gathered way and slowly diminished down-stream. The Queen had received Mr. Hawkins on deck and had given orders that a dry dock be built to receive the *Golden Hind*. The dock was duly made, and there to this day lieth the stout ship. She will be preserved there as a memorial for ever to the first Englishman who sailed round the world.

After this I often saw Sir Walter Raleigh at Deptford. He was tall and handsome, with a broad, lofty brow and pointed beard. He was always richly

dressed, and even on his visits to Mr. Hawkins at the dockyard he usually wore a quilted doublet of silk, and a striped cloak tipped with fur. Great pearls dangled from his ears. He had a proud, imperious temper, and was but little loved by the people. He was no seaman, and Mr. Hawkins would sometimes fret with impatience when he would come and talk about his schemes and plans for reaching Cathay by the frozen North-West or settling planters in the Americas. Mr. Hawkins was a busy man and had little time for triflers. However, Sir Walter had the ear of the Queen and could not be dismissed. Besides, he was after all a Devonshire man, and was faithful to his native speech.

At the end of the year 1583 came the news of the failure of the expedition commanded by Sir Humphrey Gilbert, of Compton near Paignton, and of Sir Humphrey's death by drowning in the *Squirrel*. This adventure was an attempt to found a colony in Northern America, and to judge by the poor quality of the mariners he enlisted, and the gangs of workless men taken on board as colonists, no other result but failure could be expected. Sir Walter was Gilbert's half-brother, and had taken a lead with the City of London merchants in backing the venture. When he arrived from Greenwich one day at Mr. Hawkins' office with the news that the Queen had transferred to him the powers granted to his lost half-brother, and that he had been given new Letters Patent, Mr. Hawkins was glad. Sir Walter announced his intention of fitting out an expedition with his own resources if the City merchants would

not loosen their purses again, and he declared that he would lead it himself. Mr. Hawkins thought he would be rid of him, and spared no pains to help him on. He did not forget me.

"If you're wanting a good master-gunner, Sir Walter, I have here the very man. He be a good enough storekeeper, but a better gunner. Devonshire born and bred too. I doubt not he'd like to go. Eh, Heard? What say you? I thought so."

Sir Walter looked at me. "Where be ye from? Topsham? Near to Withycombe. Wish I were to Withycombe now. A man tires of the Court. I'd accept any man that Mr. Hawkins commends. See Captain Amadas at Blackwall to-morrow."

I went down to Blackwall to find that Captain Amadas of the *Merlin* had taken on a master-gunner, but that his fellow-captain, Arthur Barlow, still lacked one for his bark, *Curlew*. I was appointed to her, and a fine, well-found ship she was. The most part of the crews had had their imprest money by the month of March, and victual and provision were being put aboard. No colonists were taken in the ships. We were to go out and report on the conditions and discover territory fit for occupation and settlement. The settlers would follow after.

In spite of all, Mr. Hawkins would not be rid of Sir Walter. To the latter's disgust and Mr. Hawkins' disappointment the Queen would not spare him to go from her side. Sir Walter sent the two captains their sailing orders and directions in April. Early in that month we weighed anchor, rounded Blackwall Point, and dropped down the Thames.

Captain Philip Amadas was short and sturdy, with brown beard, twinkling eyes, and a quiet wit. Captain Barlow was several inches over six feet, pale of countenance, but of a merry, laughing disposition. The masters were good seamen, the weather was fair, we had no difficulty in keeping in company down Channel, nor did the *Curlew* ever once lose sight of the *Merlin* all across the Ocean Sea. In Fleet Creek, Dartmouth, we lay at low water and stopped a leak. It was, I remember, almost at the end of April 1584 that we had our last look at England as the *Lizard* was swallowed up in the grey mist of evening.

Nearly a fortnight later we arrived at the Canaries, where we disturbed no Spaniard and were molested by none. Some time in June we came to Dominica in the Indies, with its cone-shaped mountains all girt about with forest trees. We landed there for refreshment, water, and fruits. By July we had passed between the Cape of Florida and Havana and were sailing northwards. Soon we noticed that the sea had changed colour, and the master ordered the leadsmen forward to take soundings. Sure enough we were in shoal water. The boatswain, Dick Taverner, who was standing next to me as we leaned overside watching the fish darting to and fro, suddenly said, "I can smell something sweet, flowers or spices." I could smell naught at first but salt sea air, but ere long I caught a whiff as of a scented garden full of flowers. Soon the sweet odour came full and strong. I saw the master throw up his head and speak to Captain Barlow. "The master hath it

also, Dick, look-so-to-me," I said. "We cannot be far from land." Orders were given to shorten sail and keep good watch.

Towards evening of the next day the seaman in the foretop sang out "Land ho!" and we cheered. A buzz ran round the ship, and there was much easy talk.

"Think you there'll be gold out over yonder?"

"Maybe aye, maybe no, but there'll be kindly fruits of the earth, as the Prayer Book saith. For my part, I'd give much hard gold for a soft, juicy, golden orange."

"I hear they, Indians be full of treachery, and shoot at you behind trees where an arquebus cannot hit them."

"Lay your arquebus down, boy. If you have the same in hand, you'll be tempted to use it, and you'll find yourself as full of arrows as a furze-pig* is of pricks."

"But do their heads grow between their shoulders?"

"No, they be proper men. And they do not eat their enemies, neither, leastways the Indians I know don't."

"Yes, they do, the Caribs do. I've seen the half of a man all roasted by a fire they had left."

"Some folks know not the difference between a man's carcass and that of an *iguana*." †

"*Iguanas*? What be they?"

Thus and thus went the talk between the old hands and the new as we drew nearer and nearer to

* Hedgehog.

† A huge lizard.

the shore. The land looked a fair and a goodly one, and all supposed it to be the main land of the continent of America. It seemed passing strange to us that there were no rivers or creeks. We sailed along northwards for one hundred and twenty English miles and saw no opening at all. Into the first that did appear we entered. It was a narrow channel and somewhat shallow. We anchored within culverin shot of the mouth, and we all shouted for joy as the hook took the water with a splash. Mr. Barlow, and Mr. Amadas in the *Merlin*, called all hands together, read prayers, and gave thanks to God for our safe arrival thither. "Man the boats," was the next order, and we rowed ashore. When we had landed, Captain Amadas assembled us in a ring. Himself in the centre, he stood upon a case of biscuits, held up his hand for silence, and said in a loud voice, "I hereby take possession of this territory and country in the name of the Queen's most excellent Majesty as right-ful Queen and Princess of the same, and hereby declare it to be for the use of the right honourable Sir Walter Raleigh, knight, according to Her Majesty's grant and letters patent, under her Highness' Great Seal." Whereon we all shouted "God Save the Queen!" and discharged a volley of arquebus shot. The gunner of the *Merlin*, left on board, shot off three pieces of ordnance, and so the ceremony ended.

Along the shore was firm white sand. Everywhere, beside the sea, inland on the hills, creeping up the trees, covering the shrubs, was a sort of grape vine, in great abundance. We climbed to the summit of

a range of low hills that rose up from the coast, and to our astonishment beheld the sea stretching away to the horizon. With sea before us and behind us we perceived that we were on a long narrow island, not above six miles broad. Before us lay a noble prospect of little hills and valleys, in which were goodly cedars. Captain Barlow turned to me. "Mr. Gunner, have you an arquebus ready? Shoot one off into the air." The report echoed round the hills, and at the noise a flock of cranes arose from under us, blinding white in the sun, with such a cry, redoubled again and again by many echoes, that it seemed as if an army of men had shouted all together.

The woods held great plenty of deer, hares, and wild fowl. The trees were not dark forests of gloomy pines and firs, but tall red cedars. I had never seen any grown so high anywhere in the world. We set up a camp on the side of the island next to our ships, and abode there two whole days ere we saw any people of the country. On the third day we returned to the ships. The crews were lining the rails, talking eagerly and taking in the prospect new and strange and beautiful. Their discourse was of what manner of men there were ashore, if indeed there were any.

"Look!" sang out one. "Look, a canoe coming round the foreland!"

"Three men in her, a'nt there? Paddling well, too."

"There she goes, run aground on the sands."

"How far away would ye say she were? Three arquebus shot? Four?"

One of the men began to walk along by the water's edge in our direction, and when he had come near he paced up and down opposite our ships. "Man the longboat!" ordered the master of the *Merlin*, and he and Captain Amadas were rowed ashore. The Indian fearlessly awaited their coming. We saw the party land. The Indian spoke earnestly to them for some time. We watched the Englishmen shaking their heads, and Captain Amadas pointing to his boat. He made as if to invite the Indian to enter his boat. Greatly to our surprise the Indian nodded his head gravely thrice, went in with them, and was rowed back to the *Merlin*. He clambered on board with the rest, and we lost sight of him for a while. In about an hour came a hail, "*Carlew aho!*" and there was the boat with the *Merlin's* master bearing the Indian towards our ship. Captain Barlow came to the side and received him.

"He seems to be a gentleman in his own country," said the master of the *Merlin*. "He hath perfect manners. We gave him a shirt and a hat, both of which he lacked, but he could discover no use for them. Some of our meat and wine he hath had, and liked them well enough, or pretended to. Try him with some beer, sir, if you have any left, and see how he relishes that."

"Boy, a cup of beer," said our captain, and turned to welcome the stranger, who had just come aboard. He was a tall savage, handsome, though of a dark copper colour, long black hair hanging down on one side of his head. On his back was a deerskin with the fur inwards, and round his middle another. He

wore a sort of shoe or sandal of soft leather with devices worked thereon. Our captain conducted him round the ship from poop to forecastle and down to the hold. His face was unmoved and he gave no sign of wonder or surprise, but he grimaced at the beer. For that I blamed him not, for 'twas sour stuff. Howbeit, his eyes glistened with pleasure when Captain Barlow gave him a knife and showed him how well it cut wood, for these savages have only tools of stone and bone.

We put him on shore, and he forthwith went back to his canoe, his companions having departed. He quickly paddled about two bowshots out to sea, and fell to fishing with a line. In half an hour his canoe was full, laden so deep that he had to paddle in very carefully or else he had been swamped. When on shore he divided the fish into two heaps, pointed from one to the *Merlin*, from the other to the *Curlew*. Having thus courteously repaid us, he raised his hand and vanished from our sight round the headland.

Canoes swarmed around the ships next day. In one of them was the chief, attended by forty or fifty of his braves. They were fine handsome fellows, goodly to look upon, and as well-mannered and civil as any European. They were nearly naked and appeared to be unarmed. The chief left his canoe by the shore a little way off, and walked along by the sea's edge until he came opposite the ships, followed by his men. When he was come near, they spread a long roll of matting on the ground, on which he sat. Four others of his company sat down at the other

end of the mat, and the rest disposed themselves in a half-circle some way behind.

Parties from both ships (I was one of the *Curlew's* party) approached him, carrying with us some arquebuses and swords. He showed no signs of fear, but beckoned to our leaders to come and sit beside him, which they did. He made signs of welcome. With a smile he touched his head and breast, and then touched those of Captain Amadas and Captain Barlow in token of friendship. He made a long and solemn speech unto us, whereof we understood nothing, but we gave him some knives and a canvas doublet lined with wool. He received them thankfully. All the while his followers stood silent, but the four men at the other end of the mat were whispering among themselves. Thereupon we gave some trifles to these, thinking that perhaps they were men of substance. Immediately the chief arose, took the articles away, and put them into his own basket beside him. Evidently we had erred in giving aught to any but himself.

The next day we put out an armed guard, and held some races between bachelors and married men. When these were done, and prizes given by the captains, we fell to wrestling. Some played at football, and others danced to my fiddle. A large company of Indians, both men and women, stood afar off and watched the sport. They all seemed very peaceable and friendly, and a day or two afterwards we began to trade with them. We obtained a great store of skins for a few axes, hatchets, and knives. For some swords they would have given

anything we asked, but Captain Amadas, our general, forbade any man to part with a sword. "It is only wisdom to maintain our strength in warlike furniture," he said, "for our friends of to-day may be our enemies of to-morrow. So far as I can learn, these people live by hunting, and by fighting with their neighbours. I will only trust them so far as I can see them." Captain Amadas was as prudent as he was valiant. We obtained fifty skins worth as many crowns for a copper kettle, and twenty more for a tin dish of little value. The chief was better pleased with this bright shining dish than with anything else we had. He made a hole in the brim thereof and hung it on his breast about his neck, making many signs, by which I thought he held it to be a breastplate against the arrows of his enemy.

The next day the chief came aboard, first in the *Merlin*, then the *Curlew*. We gave him wine and bread, both of which he seemed to like exceedingly, so much so that he afterwards brought his wife and two or three children to the ships. His wife was comely, of middle height and rather shy. She wore a long cloak of skins, with more skins in front, and her long straight black hair hung down on both sides. Like her husband she had on her forehead a band of white coral, and huge earrings of pearls as big as peas. Some women with her had earrings of copper. The chief had a headpiece made of copper, or it may have been gold.

During our sojourn on these shores, which Sir Walter Raleigh afterwards named Virginia, in honour of the Queen, I learnt all that I could about

the habits of these people. They have no edged tools like ours, and it is marvellous how they make their canoes, some of which hold twenty men. They take a wind-fallen tree, or burn one down. They then set fire to some gum and resin and hollow out the trunk by burning, digging out the charcoal with their chisels made of shell or bone. Sometimes they use paddles, and sometimes, if the depth serves, push the boat along by means of poles.

The chief sent us every day a fat buck, or a brace of hares, or fish, different kinds of fruits, and their country corn. The women till the soil and grow this corn, getting three crops a year. It needeth little labour, for they break the soft turf with a wooden mattock and cast in the seed. In two months they are reaping. Some of our men set a row of peas in the earth, and in ten days they were a foot high. The soil is most marvellous rich, the most sweet, fruitful, and wholesome in all the world. They never fatten the ground with dung, nor plough nor dig it as we do in England, but only make holes with a tool like a mattock, as I have said. The corn they raise is the same as the maize of the West Indies, tall stalks six foot high or more, each bearing heads with hundreds of grains, of the bigness of peas. Strawberries grow wild as well as they do in our English gardens, and whortleberries the same as on our moors and heaths. Tobacco the savages also cultivate. They call it *Uppowoc* or some such name. During the time we were there, we used to suck in the smoke through pipes after their manner, and experienced its rare and wonderful virtues.

As for the people, they go naked save for cloaks of deerskins and aprons of the same. They are divided into separate kingdoms or tribes, and are always fighting one with another. Most commonly their manner of war is by surprise or ambush. Set and open battles take place but rarely, except where there are many trees, behind which the archers may take cover. This people believe (so I think) in many gods, but also in one great Spirit or chief God. They make them images of their gods. But let me return to our travels inland.

Mr. Barlow, with Midwinter (the master's mate), myself, and four men armed with arquebuses went in a boat northwards until we came to another island, which the Indians call Roanoak, about seven leagues distant from the harbour wherein we entered from the Ocean Sea. At the north end of the island was a village of nine houses, fortified round about with sharpened trunks of trees.

"Tumble out," said Captain Barlow; "arquebusiers, take position two on each flank and light your matches."

We advanced cautiously, splashing through the shallow water, when a woman appeared, running down to meet us in a very cheerful and friendly fashion. She was none other than the wife of the chief we knew already, who had been aboard the ships. She ordered some of her people to draw up our boat on shore, for the waves were beating upon it. Others she detailed to carry us on their backs to the dry land, and some more to bring our oars up to the house for fear of loss or theft. Her house was

much larger and better than the common sort, being built of cedar wood and having five rooms. It appeared that her husband was away.

It had been raining, and we were very wet. She made us sit down in the outer room around a great fire, took off our clothes and dried them. We sat nearly naked by the fire, trying to keep warm.

Captain Barlow laughed. "Such courtesy," he said, "I had not looked for."

"No, sir," I replied, "but I should rejoice to have my clothes again."

"They will not be long before a fire like this," said Midwinter. "Have I care they do not scorch them. See, here come three more women."

They pulled off our stockings and washed them, and three more brought earthen bowls of warm water and bathed our feet. The chief's wife herself overlooked the dressing of meat for our entertainment. When we had dried and clothed ourselves, we were brought into the inner room, and there was spread a feast. There was frumenty, boiled and roast venison, roast and boiled fish, melons and other fruits, on platters of wood. We fell to hungrily. We were treated with all love and kindness, and with as much generosity as they could possibly devise. Indeed, I found the people most gentle, empty of all deceit and treason. I felt that we were living in the golden age.

In the evening we made as if to go. The chief's wife seemed very sorry, and signed to us to remain seated.

"What do you say, sir?" I asked. "She wants us to stay the night, look-so-to-me."

"Nay," said the captain, "the general would not have it. All told, we are but a few men in the ships. It might happen to us through any treachery, the voyage would be in great peril. We dare not do it."

So we left, though according to our experience hitherto we were safe enough. I for one would like to have stayed. It was raining again, and she and all her people were much grieved and entreated us to abide with them. Nevertheless, we went down to our boat, pushed off a little from the shore, and lay there all night. The mosquitoes loved me. It be something, Dick, to have someone to love you, even if it be only a fly. The good wife sent down our supper to us, and also some mats to shelter us from the rain. As soon as it was light we departed, grateful for all the goodness shown to us.

We had a fair run home, with no notable happening, and came into London at the end of September 1584.

CHAPTER VIII

ARMADA

It seemed that if ever I was to make my fortune, it would be on land and not on sea, though one appeared almost as barren as the other. Ashore I could earn enough to maintain myself, whereas at sea my luck was ever bad. No prizes came my way, nothing but rough living and hard knocks, and the manifold inconveniences of a life afloat. For a time I was disposed to bide ashore, but even as I made up my mind, I knew that my restless spirit would break out one day, and that I should surely take the sea road once more. Nevertheless, Mr. Hawkins was a man for whom it was a pleasure to work, my lodging in Deptford was comfortable, and life was very tolerable. I had my fiddle, and there was a tavern in Deptford where I was wont to go on winter nights with other workers in the dockyard. By rushlight and with viols, cornet, or dulcimer we used to make merry music. One Francis Black, I remember, did sing very sweetly. Shove-groat was a great sport in this house. There be many ways of playing, but I have always found it best to strike the coin with the fleshy cushion at the base of the thumb. •

Tobacco was very dear in those days, and pipes were sixpence each. Truly I could not afford to smoke much, but I was always one to put my money on a gridiron and let it run through the bars. Much

of my wages went in plays at the theatre. You have seen plays done in inn-yards over to Exeter? Well, in London the players have forsaken the inn-yards and built them a playhouse, mighty fine and commodious. It was in Shoreditch, outside the City. I used to go up by water, or walk when money was scarce, as it generally was towards the end of the month. You could buy bottled ale and tobacco in the pit. In general people listened to the play, if it were by Marlowe or George Peele, but a bad play was hissed off. If you wished to see some fun, you went, at Shrove-tide or some other holiday when the apprentices were there. Then, indeed you heard less of the play, but great stamping of feet and ribaldries, and a fire of shouts about the play itself and the actors. One day, when I was standing in the pit, a pickpocket was taken and hoisted on to the stage. He was mightily pelted with nuts, cores of apples, and orange-skins.

Another diversion, was the noble sport of bear-baiting, which was liked by the citizens as much as the playgoing. Seldom have I seen a bear slain, though often torn and vanquished. At the first onset the bear would maul three or four mastiff dogs, and the rest of the dogs would retire to the edge of the bear-garden and bark furiously. Their noise and the shouts and yells of the watchers made a wondrous din. Bulls were often baited, but I loved bears best. Cocking was done everywhere. A pit lay off the High Street at Deptford, and many a main of cocks was fought there. Much good sport is to be had if one lives near a great city.

Coaches were coming in about this time. With the carriers' carts they used to block the streets, so that the rich folks that owned them were imprisoned in the press of traffic. Sometimes on the south side of the bridge I would be picked up by an empty coach going down to the Court at Greenwich and would climb up beside the driver. The coachmen have no patience. Loud are their curses if they are overtaken by anything faster than themselves. "Look at yon hasty fellow! Didst mark how he cut in before me? He driveth to the common danger, and all to gain a moment of time. Plaguey foolish, I call it." A minute later there is a different tale. "A pox on that lousy carrier! Get out of the way! Out of the way, I say!" The coachmen are as talkative as barbers, ever ready to speak of the doings of the day.

"I was nigh Paul's Cross last Sunday. Ever been there, sir? It was a mighty fine sermon, I'm sure, but I could make nothing of it. It was the Dean, and 'e was talking about the four horsemen of the apoplex. Do you know aught of them? I never did. I believe the King of Spain had something to do with it. They say there'll soon be a real and proper war with Spain. What'll 'appen if the Spanishers come to England? We'll 'ave the tortures of the Imposition, I suppose. Do you think our ships will sink them? Or shall we have to fight it out here? You're very busy at the dockyard, a'nt you, sir?"

We were indeed busy, for by 1585 there was but little pretence of peace. In that year Sir Francis Drake had sailed with a great armada for the Indies, and had hammered the Dons properly. The com-

panies of trained bands also were active down to Mile End, whither I went one Sunday after church to see them trail a pike, carry an arquebus, and do their exercises. The exercises were indifferently done. I did thank God that we had a Navy, for these men could hardly have stood up to the disciplined Spanish soldiers, or so I thought then.

The most agreeable way of going to and from London was by water, and whenever I had to go to Mr. Hawkins' house in Mincing Lane and could thus draw the waterman's fare, I travelled in such manner. I became friendly with a certain waterman. He was mighty skilful at shooting the arches of the Bridge. Most passengers down-stream landed at the Old Swan stairs above Bridge, and walked to Billings Gate below it, but if ever I had to do the journey I always hired Old Will, and shot the Bridge. It could only be done on the ebb; on the flood it was impossible. The piers and starlings were very broad and the arches narrow. As we came racing down with the tide and with Will swinging at the oars the Bridge grew more threatening every moment. The tall houses loomed higher and higher, the little O of light for which we were making seemed so small as a porthole. Just when a wreck seemed certain Will would look over his shoulder, ship his starboard oar, give a flick with the other and swing it inboard. We rushed into the darkness, on to the roaring waters. Up went the bows. The boat paused for an instant, then shot down the rapids into the whirling white water. We were through.

It was towards the end of 1586 that I nearly died

of the smallpox. I had been to dinner in a tavern at Deptford, and I remember I had made some complaint of the rushes on the floor, which were stinking, and should have been changed many days before. I could not eat and sat over a cup of beer. On a sudden I fell a shivering, and vomited. The drawer helped me home. My lodging then was with a tanner named Wilkins. For many days I was very sick, and hard'ly knew who was my nurse and deliverer, your Aunt Elizabeth, the tanner's niece. By the special providence of God she did not take the infection, and after it was over and I cured, she married me, all pockmarked as I was, and ugly. There be times when I feel I am not fit to strew rushes before your Aunt Elizabeth. While I was slowly recovering my strength, we used to go down on sunny days to the waterside and watch the tall ships go down the river, bound for all the world. Or we'd see them limping home, scarred (like me) with the fury of the seas or with the shot of their enemies. We had a proper wedding—a rare feast, 'twas.

I was back at work early in the New Year. Mr. Hawkins had never been so busy, for on him depended, under God, the well-being of the Navy and so the safety of the realm. That famous ship, the *Merchant Royal*, with several others of London, had gone to Plymouth to join Sir Francis Drake, fresh from his campaign in the Indies. One gusty April morning Mr. Hawkins was in a mighty good temper.

“The Queen's messenger is back along from Plymouth. She sent him with a letter to stay Drake, but her message was too late. Frankie's well away. He

weighed anchor the moment the wind went northerly. He'll bolt the rats from their holes and worry them like a dog."

Drake's swoop on Cadiz is not forgotten yet. They rang the bells in London when he came back. But the danger was only put off, and these were anxious days. The charcoal-burners in the Wealden forests were hard at work, and the ironmasters of Sussex were casting guns by the score. They were hauled up to London or down to Rye port, where they were tested and passed by Mr. Hawkins' inspector there. The guns for Plymouth went to Rye. Three times that summer, and again and again in the winter and in the spring of 1588, I sailed from London to pick up the guns at Rye and hand them over to Mr. William in Plymouth dockyard. Rye sits on a hill above the marshes, with steep streets winding up to the summit capped by its church. On my last voyage we passed up the narrow River Rother on the flood-tide to be brought alongside the quays nigh to the building slips. The master said to me:

"There be scores and scores of fair towns like this up and down old England. Pray God the Spaniards do not land. I've seen what they've done in the Low Countries—persecutions, burnings, and oppressions. There's a huge army assembling just over the water yonder, waiting to be ferried over, they tell me."

"We can sink them."

"Not if the Spanish fleet comes out and covers them."

"They'll have to sink Frankie Drake first."

"Ah, and suppose they do, what then? And if they do not, can Drake do more than just annoy them? Suppose they land on the Isle of Wight, what then?"

"If they do that, they will not be covering Parma's army."

So the talk ran, wherever men met. England, her Queen, her faith, her freedom, all she held dear, were in deadly peril that year. Well for England, though I say it, that she had ashore and afloat stout and steadfast hearts of English oak.

It was good to be at sea again. We had removed a lot of ballast and had carefully stowed away the pieces of ordnance on straw. Our ship, the *Mermaid* of Rye, tossed uncomfortably in the short Channel waves, but there was a fresh breeze behind us, the sky was blue with white clouds sailing, and the pale cliffs stood along the north, the green turf cloaking them. England, our England, looked very lovely. We prayed that the shadow we could not see on that smiling day, but could feel was there, would pass away and leave our England free.

The chalk cliffs turned to grey rock, and then to rose-red as we sailed westward, and came at last into Plymouth Sound. We cast anchor early one evening, and the master and I went straightway to the dockyard. Here was a sight. Men were working in shifts by day and by night. There was a high wind blowing. The torches and cressets were flaring and flickering with plumes of black smoke, casting strange and uncertain shadows on the busy ant-like crowds, the hulls, the ribs and knees and planks,

masts and yards. The shipwrights, the caulkers, the carpenters, the riggers were all at their several employments. It was a scene of orderly confusion and clamour.

Mr. William Hawkins himself greeted us, and welcomed our cargo.

"We'll get you unloaded in the morning. This be a brave sight, sure enough. Costly, this night work, but we spare not the expense in times like these. No man knoweth when the Spaniard will come. Francis Drake hath been made vice-admiral, and my Lord Howard will soon join him here with the ships from London. So shall we have the whole navy under one command in the place where it should be."

Mr. John had bidden me not to hasten back if I could be of use to Mr. William, and for two months or more I remained at Plymouth. At the end of May there was a rumour that the Dons were actually on their way over. We prayed that God would send a wind. The combined fleets of my Lord Howard and Sir Francis Drake had done watering, and were eagerly waiting for the first wind for the coast of Spain. It came, and great crowds gathered on the Hoe to give God-speed to the gallant ships as they put out to sea. But stormy weather and a gale set in from the Ocean. We heard afterwards that it had battered the galleons of Spain, but it drove ours back to Plymouth. The smaller craft were of course crowded in the Cattewater, while the greater ships rolled and pitched and danced in the broken waters of the Sound as the tides swept in and out.

About the third week in June Mr. Hawkins sent

for me. "Here's a letter to Mr. John from Sir Francis. You must take it and ride post. Read it and get it by rote, in case of accident. There be many tall ships fitting out in London, and master-gunners scarce. Join up, if you will. Us'll need all the men that can be got ere this business be overpast."

The letter ran something after this fashion :

"News hath come that the late storms have driven the Spanish fleet into their own harbours on the north coast of Spain. I have written these tidings to Mr. Secretary Walsingham, and I do beseech you to urge the Queen's Majesty and the Council to let us go and by the blessing of God to destroy them. My opinion is that we shall fight with them much better on their own coast than here, for this is the worst place to stay for them. We are but spending our victual here to no purpose. For the love of God and our country, beg them to hasten the victualling ships, and to send shot of all bigness and powder with it. Then I pray you come post to Plymouth, where the *Victory* waits you."

So I found myself riding again to London, not with my little captain, but for him. A great man he was now, vice-admiral of England. This time it was summer. I was to ride post-haste, and do in two or three days that which had taken two weeks with our own horses. I did not have to battle with the clinging sticky mud. The worst enemy was the dust—dust in the eyes, hair, and beard, in every fold of your clothing, silting up and parching your throat, in clouds all about you. The post inns were always good, and you were sure of clean sheets, the best

food, and excellent ale, but at Shaftesbury, where I lay the first night, the post inn was full. I found room at another. I made great point of the matter of the sheets, for I was very weary, and had no desire to lay awake scratching, or catching fleas. The hostess swore that they were clean. "As if I would give anything else to any man, let alone a gentleman like yourself, sir. A seafarer and a great traveller, I doubt not? We give each and every traveller clean sheets wherein no man hath lodged since they came from the laundress. And well-aired they are too." With this assurance I was fain to be content, and suffered a servant to pull off my boots.

I carried a pair of wheel-lock pistols which I kept ready loaded. Some parts of the countryside like Salisbury Plain were overrun with vagabonds and rogues, and there was some risk of robbery, especially after dark. I kept my weather eye open, but no man molested me. Three knaves with long staves stopped in a lonely spot as I approached, but they saw my pistols and refrained from attack, if that had been their intention. I abode another night on the way, and the next morning I arrived to the outskirts of London, past the gibbet at Tyburn, in at New Gate, on past the Royal Exchange to Mr. Hawkins' house in Mincing Lane, where happily I discovered him. He told me that my Lord the Earl of Cumberland's ship, *Elizabeth Bonaventure*, of six hundred tons, was yet at Chatham, being caulked, and would soon be ready for sea.

"She's a Queen's ship, a stout vessel, launched about twenty-seven years back, and in her prime.

She hath not her full complement, and ye may find in her a post as master-gunner, for gunners do not grow on every furze-bush. There are many more smaller craft, mostly London merchantmen, if she faileth you. The Earl is a good commander, you'm right with him. And Mr. Bramblehook the master is a mighty fine seaman. So I'm to beard the Privy Council, hey? Well, it'll not be the first time. Then Westward ho! to sea again!"

Thus bustling John Hawkins, as he strode down to the river to take boat for Greenwich, and I with him as far as Deptford to see my wife. She was troubled. Those were troublous days. The shadow grew ever darker, slowly creeping over the sky, and you could almost hear the rustling of the coming storm.

"I suppose you must go," said she. "But who'll take care of me if the Spaniards come? I'll take a pike myself, I will. Let the Queen lead a women's army. I believe women can do much of what men think they alone have power to perform. For thirty years a woman hath ruled this realm. Did you not tell me you saw in your travels up to London a Hampshire woman hunting in a man's breeches and boots? If hunting the hare, why not the Spaniard? How think you I would look in breeches? But don't let them come, Jonathan, don't let them come."

I found a pinnace going from the dockyard down to Chatham, discovered there the *Elizabeth Bonaventure*, saw Mr. Bramblehook, and then my Lord, a tall and proper man. He was young and long and broad and strong, with a curling brown beard,

bushy, not pointed as was then the fashion at Court. He wore a high-crowned hat, no ruff, but a linen collar edged with lace. I was appointed master-gunner upon Mr. Hawkins' commendation, and began at once to know my men and the guns my charge. This was by far the largest ship I had ever been in, and the first to fly the Queen's own flag as well as the cross of Saint George. My quarters were in a large room immediately below the captain's cabin, and below where the bronze-gilt poop lantern swayed to and fro, with its four candles so thick as your wrist. By the time we were up to full strength we had a hundred and fifty mariners, seventy or eighty soldiers, and under me some twoscore gunners, more or less skilled. We had two great cannon, two demi-cannon, eighteen culverins and demi-culverins, besides eight small quick-firing ordnance if it came to fighting inboard. Yes, a culverin fired a sixteen-pound shot.

We were towed down the Medway, and spread our sails on the open waters. After rounding the Forelands, we ran into thick, dirty weather. The boatswain was a friendly soul, and when the rain ceased we took a turn on deck.

"When I was in London two weeks ago," he said, "there was great talk that the Biscayan ships in harbour were flying red-cross flags, English colours. All men said it was a great presumption, coming from the pride and haughtiness of the Spaniards, and not to be endured by Englishmen. Ho! there goes your hat. Lost the best part of your head, Gunner?"

"The Devil's flown away with it," said I, "and I

have the toothache on me. Aye, the flying of our flag be a bitter offence, but maybe it was not the flag of Saint George. I served as a soldier in a Spanish galleon once, and she flew the red cross of Saint Andrew."

My tooth grew worse, and I saw the surgeon, who said that two must be drawn. He sate me down in a chair. His mate stood behind and clutched my shoulders. The surgeon gripped my tooth with his instrument, and there was a great tugging. He hurt me mightily, but the teeth came out, and were a good riddance.

There was proper discipline in the Queen's ship, *Elizabeth Bonaventure*. Each morning the captain and master went on a round of inspection, saw that the men's quarters were neat and clean, that the guns and all tackle were shipshape, and the stores and all victual were in proper order. One day I found one of my men picking lice out of the seams of his breeches: "Yes, sir," he said, "and the whole ship's company will be lousy before we've finished this campaign." I thought that this was likely to be only too true. We reached Plymouth about the middle of July, and joined my Lord Howard's fleet. Shore leave was granted by watches. I went down to see Mr. William Hawkins, and found Mr. John with him. Mr. John showed no sign of anxiety. He was calm and confident.

"Well, Gunner," said he, "we'll soon be hammering the Dons. They say the Spanishers are still in port, and my Lord Howard is to sail when the wind is right. All will go well if we do not let them board

and fling the soldiers, with which their ships are pestered, into us. We must keep our distance and use our guns. Drake'll see to that. He've brought the Lord Admiral round to our way of thinking."

Early in the afternoon of the very next day, the 19th of July, I was walking on the Hoe with Rudd the boatswain when I saw a small fair man hastening in the direction of the bowling-green, and talking excitedly to a crowd of men, women, and children at his heels. We followed. "Spaniards off the Lizard!" screamed a woman to me. "They'm coming! Oh! Oh!" She fell to weeping. Rudd and I looked at one another, but neither said aught. On the green I could see the Lord High Admiral's tall figure, with long-legged Martin Frobisher, Captain Hawkins, Captain Winter, and many others I did not know by sight. The small man ran up breathlessly, and saluting, spoke to my Lord Howard. "What!" I heard the Lord Admiral shout. Consternation showed itself on the faces of all around. There was a hubbub of shouts and orders. Then I saw Drake's stocky figure straighten.

"What be this-yer commotion about?" my little captain bawled in his seaman's voice. "What? Spaniards? Be they coming? Oh, well, finish the game. Finish the game. I tell 'ee! Time enough for that, and to beat they gentry afterwards."

With that he bent again and trundled his wood towards the jack. The outcry ceased. Men turned towards the game, but their minds were far away.

"Very well, Sir Francis," said the Lord Admiral. "Is it my turn?" And he stooped and played. "See

that the beacon is lighted, Captain Hawkins," he said.

"Aye, aye, my Lord, 'tis already done." And even as he spoke, the cresset flickered and flared away in fire and smoke to light the flames on all the English hills.

The bowls lay forgotten as the game ended. A few earnest words with my Lord, and Drake was afire himself. Drums were quickly beating, and men poured cheering out of the taverns and houses to join their ships in the Hamoaze or the Sound. Rudd and I ran down to the *Elizabeth's* longboat, and waited impatiently for her to fill up. We were indeed in perilous case. The same wind that was bringing the Spaniards up could take them into port to destroy us. The wind also prevented us from sailing out. It would take us all that night and next day to row out, and meanwhile the Spaniards might arrive and lay off to snap us up one by one.

Orders came to get to sea with the utmost speed. All night the mariners laboured in shifts at the oars of tugboat and pinnace. As our great ship slowly moved through the water, the towrope slapping the sea, we scoured and charged the guns and made ready our priming and linstocks. We could hear the cries of the leadsmen as they felt their way to clear the shoals. Ship after ship came through to open water. By the next night, a Saturday, the peril was past. The English fleet was at sea, and eager hearts beat high.

During the night we followed the Lord Admiral with the wind abeam, due south, with the Eddystone Rock well to starboard. What was he about to do?

It became plain when at last we changed course to the westward. He was going to windward of the enemy. As we beat to and fro down Channel and were nearing the end of a northerly tack, Rudd suddenly gripped my arm as we leaned over the rail. "There they are," he cried. Sure enough we could just make out a glimmering confusion of lights. Enemy in sight! But my Lord Howard held on, till when dawn broke we saw the Great Armada, far away to leeward to the east of us, covering miles of sea.

The Lord Admiral in the *Ark Royal* turned towards the enemy. As he did so, a great martial shout arose from all the ship's company. We were half a cable's length from him, and as we went about to follow, our people sprang to the shrouds and ran to the bulwarks, waving their helmets and crying, "Elizabeth, Elizabeth! St. George, St. George!" As ship after ship foamed round, we heard over the heaving water their companies' joyful cries.

We swiftly overhauled the lumbering Spanish galleons. We could see their towering after-castles, all bravely carved and gilded and painted, their sails with a red cross slashed across them, the bright banners of the saints or grandees, and streamers stiff in the breeze. The sun, as it wore round, winked and flashed on the arms and furniture of the soldiers. We primed our guns and stood by. The English inshore squadron that had come out under the land, rounded Rame Head and beat to windward, was running down to meet us. The wind freshened. The sea, which had just been ruffled by the breeze, be-

gan to be flecked with white. We heeled over beneath our press of sail, and the plunging beak sent back clouds of spray.

It was to be a gunners' battle. Orders were strict that we were not to close, but to fight loose and large. We had the wind of them, so all was well, and I rejoiced. My heart beat fast, but with excitement, not with fear. As we swept within full cannon range the *Ark Royal* ran the blood-red flag up to her mainmast. It was the signal to engage, and all the trumpets sounded. A little pinnace darted across our bows, loosed off her greatest ordnance at the nearest Spaniard, and went about. As the shot went smacking through the tops of the waves we cheered her again and again. The *Ark Royal* spoke. *Flash-flash-*, *ash* from her side, the battle-thunder broke from her, and we sailed into her smoke. As we came abreast of the proud Spaniard I blew my whistle. We let her have our broadside, and as we drew on and the smoke rolled away, I could see where our shot had splintered her side. Her mainsail was rent and the yard split, while thin streaks of blood ran out of her scupper holes. The Spanish fire was wild. Splashes of foam leapt from the sea short of us, and a few balls whistled through our rigging. We drew off to reload and to make room for the ships following. The surgeon down below was standing by with lint and vinegar for the wounds, with the horrid tools of his craft, and the ugly red-hot cautery iron. But not a man of ours so far had been hurt.

Not long after we had rejoined the Admiral, and while the other ships were coming up to deliver their

broadside, I saw a sudden upflung pillar of black smoke, and the roar of a great explosion burst upon my ear. One of the nearest and biggest Spaniards was smothered in smoke. As it rolled away, I could see that all the glory of her gilded stern-castle was rent and shattered. A mizenmast was lying over the side, and fire was licking round the splintered wreckage. One galleon was as good as gone, and one or two others must have been in evil case. Our people were happy and excited.

"We'll eat up the Dons, if it takes us six weeks!"

"There's another fire, look over yonder!"

"God send us enough powder and shot. There's never too much."

"Nay, there's always too little.

Great laughter and mockery as a heavy shot sang overhead.

"Call that shooting? Raking the sturs, so 'tis. Next minute they'll drown their shot in the sea." With the roll of the ship, he meant.

The Admiral bore down upon the Spanish fleet once more, we following, but the lame ducks were screened by fresh ships, and we did no more than fire a few shots at long range. All that short summer night and the next day we kept at the Spaniards' heels, until they arrived off Portland Bill. We had not touched the main fleet, but had plucked two of their tail-feathers. We had news that Sir Francis Drake had sent one great ship into Torbay, and we saw Captain Hawkins in the *Victory* cut off the tall galleon wherein was the explosion.

That night off Portland the fight was hot, and it

continued all the next day. I cannot tell you how the battle went. All was wrapt in smoke. The *Elizabeth* found herself within range of a towering Spaniard, and hammered him hard, then slipped away to reload and come into action again. We saw the flashes of their ordnance stabbing through the smoke-cloud that enveloped us, and which shifted and rolled away and drifted over once more. Most of their shot was short or high, but now and then one crashed through us, and two or three of our men were slain. A shot came through the gun-deck and took off the leg of a rammer. Otherwise we suffered little, save from thirst. Our eyes were aching and our throats were parched with the powder-smoke. We had two shot-holes near the water-line which were stopp'd with hides, and our mainyard was brought down. The next morning the wind dropped to a dead calm, and then blew gently from the west. All that sunny day we followed the Spaniards slowly up Channel, about five miles astern. We rigged a new spar, and our carpenters were lowered overside to plug the shot-holes and to cover them with lead.

Thursday dawned calm and fair, the wind being very light at first. Three or four miles to larboard were the cliffs of the Isle of Wight. Ere long a fresh breeze arose, and my Lord Howard and Sir Francis led our fleet to the attack. For five long hours we fought our guns, half-naked and sweating and smoke-blackened, giving much punishment and taking very little. We used a great quantity of powder and shot, which were running low, and long before it was dark we let the Spanishers drift on. My men

were lying beside their guns, weary, the sweat trickling down and making channels in the grime of their faces, but happy as crickets. "Lord, but we gave it to 'em, didn't we, sir? In the smoke I saw the white chips a-flying where we raked 'em through. They'll never get into Old England now, will they, sir?"

On Friday we rested and refitted. So did the Spaniards. All day we and they lay idly on the smooth, windless, sunlit sea, the sails hanging limp and slack. The noise of hammering came to us over the quiet water as the carpenters patched the hulls. With darkness came squalls of rain and a rising wind. The great armada moved on, and we pursued. At daybreak the boatswain said to me, "They've altered course, Gunner. They're standing over to the French coast, and must be near Boulogne. Will they round Cape Grisnez, I wonder?" Round the cape they did that afternoon, and by about five o'clock we saw their sails come down and their anchors splash into the sea. The Spaniards' great and small had come to rest in Calais Roads, a rich and splendid sight, a forest of masts and gay banners, and pennants fluttering. We cast anchor also, a culverin shot away, and watched, and waited.

There must have been a hundred sail at least in that great host, including the store-ships and small craft. It was plain to every seaman that they could not be left unmolested there. Frankie Drake would devise some cunning plan, said the men, and I think we all trusted my little captain. Meanwhile, it became known that my Lord Howard had knighted

Captain Hawkins and Captain Frobisher. Mr. John would be Sir John now. And how would Mrs. Hawkins, a very Puritan sort of woman, like being "my Lady"? The next day was a Sunday, I remember. Prayers were read on all our ships for victory in the battle we felt was yet to come, and our chaplain exhorted us to fight bravely for our faith, our queen, and country. The Spanish too were at their prayers and to the same God. I prayed that He would hear us and turn a deaf ear unto them. We could plainly hear the chanting of their friars at Mass, and the jangling of their sanctus bells.

When night fell the wind freshened and the tide was near the flood. My friend the boatswain and I were leaning over the side watching the twinkling lights of the Spanish navy, when he clutched my arm. "Look!" he cried. Away over on the larboard bow from where Drake's squadron lay were some moving lights. "One, two . . . eight, they are gathering way." Suddenly the light seemed to spread, then broadened into a glow, and from a glow to a glare. "Fireships!" we shouted together, and the men began to cheer. On they drove with wind and tide towards the Spanish armada, their ordnance shooting as the flames reached the powder in the guns. Sky and sea glowed redly, and all was plain as day. Rudd the boatswain danced with delight. "By the Lord, I believe the villains are cutting their cables!" he yelled. "See that one? Carried away her bowsprit, she has. There they go, standing out to sea. With this wind and this tide they'll be on the shoals.

Look at that great galleass. She's lost her rudder. She'll be ashore in a few minutes." The chaplain led the men in singing the Old Hundredth Psalm, and I ran for my viol.

By the light of day we found the Spanish fleet had gone towards Gravelines. Far away we saw what looked like Drake and Hawkins following them, but the Lord Admiral was for making good prize of the galleass that had gone ashore beneath the forts of Calais. My Lord the Earl of Cumberland kept the *Elizabeth* standing by, but I heard him say to the master, "We may get some plunder, but we are missing a good fight." The cliffs were black with multitudes of citizens of Calais assembled to watch the storming and pillage of the galleass. When all was done, and the galleass's empty shell was left, we followed the *Ark Royal* to where Drake and the rest were hammering the enemy off Gravelines. The Spaniards fought well, and the affair became hot. We kept close, at musket range, but not close enough to be run aboard. We discharged our broadside, swung away to reload, and came on again. The *Elizabeth* lost divers gunners, killed and wounded, and some few mariners and soldiers. The surgeon and his mates had work to do.

Many of the Spaniards were shot quite to pieces, and leaking badly, with dead and wounded littered everywhere. We had cut them out of the line, surrounded them and finished them, but when our powder and shot were well-nigh gone, one by one we drew off.

It mattered little, for we had the sea room, while

the north-west wind was edging the Spaniards on to the shoals to leeward. I left the stifling gun-deck, where the men were drinking from cans of beer that had been brought to them. On the upper deck swabbers were busy mopping up. From the look of it, the Spanish fleet seemed to be doomed. Surely naught could save the rolling galleons from the sands. But God sent a change of wind. It backed to west-south-west. The enemy stood towards the north and to open sea.

Thus the Lord had saved the Spaniards from destruction. His purpose oft appears dark and strange, but that which followed made all clear in due time. The Spaniards continued on a northerly course past the Duke of Parma's army, and we went after them. But we had no powder or shot, food and water were short, the beer was going bad, the men were very weary, and fever had begun. Off Harwich my Lord of Cumberland was summoned to the Admiral, and when he returned orders were given to make sail with all possible speed for Tilbury, to bear the news of the Spaniards' departure to Her Majesty.

To Tilbury we went therefore with great joy and with all our flags and streamers flying.

News of our coming had gone before us. When we cast anchor in the river my Lord the Earl of Cumberland and his gentlemen were rowed ashore. Mr. Bramblehook followed in a cock-boat with the boatswain and me. A guard of honour was drawn up by the landing slipway, stout fellows with buff coats, steel head-pieces and corselets, one rank

armed with arquebuses and the other with bills and bucklers. My Lord the Earl of Leicester was there to receive him of Cumberland, and with the guard to conduct him to the Queen's pavilion. The soldiers were already on parade, thousands upon thousands drawn up in long lines. Good news as well as bad flies fast, and every man knew why he was standing there in the heat of the sun. Orders were given to lie at ease, and at once arose a merry din and singing. We officers had been given a station about a furlong from the royal enclosure.

Suddenly there was a blare of silver trumpets. Thirty thousand men sprang to their feet with a mighty clatter of warlike gear. Followed the long, long roll of the drums, and the trumpets playing. The Queen appeared. My Lords of Leicester and Cumberland walked on either side of her white horse. Over her magnificent apparel was laced a corselet of polished steel, and a page bore her white-plumed helmet. A great shout arose from her army. She bowed, held up her hand for silence. The clamour died away. I could not hear what she said, and only the front ranks of that vast array could have done so, but at the end of it their shouts of pride and joy were taken up rank by rank till all the air was filled with torrents of sound.

CHAPTER IX

PRIZE-MONEY.

We of the *Elizabeth Bonaventure* were home a full fortnight or three weeks before the rest of the fleet, and so escaped the worst of the fever that broke out among the crews. But many of our fellows died. It was grievous to see those that had fought so valiantly perish so miserably. We had to wait many days for our pay, and they that abode in the infected ships sickened and died. My Lord of Cumberland received from the Queen's Majesty the accustomed present for the bearers of good tidings, and like the open-handed gentleman he was, distributed it among us all. My share was £10, and I gave it to my wife as the first money I had earned above my pay.

We had borne good tidings, it was true, but there were many anxious days to come. News kept on reaching us that the Spanish armada had turned back and was going to join with Parma after all, and we had only fever-wasted crews and foul ships to deal with them. They had been seen off Holland, they had anchored in the Moray Firth. In face of these rumours men knew not whether to believe the positive tidings that the armada had been seen beyond the Orkneys. It was not until November, after the Queen's birthday, that it was known God had blown with His winds and had scattered them. Then

and then only did London give itself over to thanksgiving.

My Lord the Earl of Cumberland had so gotten the favour of the Queen by his tale of victory that she lent him her ship the *Victory*, the same in which Sir John Hawkins had carried his flag, for a venture, namely, to lay off the Azores and capture treasure ships homeward bound from the Indies. The Earl was a man under whom you could be proud to serve. He was rich, and his ships were always well-found. He was generous, and careful of his men, and when I heard that he was taking in the *Victory* his master of the *Elizabeth Bonaventure*, Mr. Anthony Bramblehook, I had no doubt but that I would be master-gunner if I so desired. So it fell out. I told my good wife that the Earl always made money, that with such a commander and such a master, good fortune might be mine at last. We all had an advance of pay to leave to our wives, and I parted from her easy in my mind and confident.

In the late spring of 1589 we set sail from London after much drinking of healths and dancing by the sailors, and shot off some of our ordnance in passing Greenwich as a salute to Her Majesty. We put into Plymouth to complete our company and provision, leaving the Sound in June. There was the *Victory*, one of the Queen's ships royal as I have said, with two small ships, the *Meg* and the *Margaret*, and a small caravel. Nigh on four hundred souls were in them, of mariners and soldiers, with seven or eight gentlemen adventurers, and my Lord the Earl.

Three days out from Plymouth we began to make

prizes. I was not accustomed to such good fortune, and prayed that it would hold. On a bright sparkling morning we came upon three French ships. Finding them to be from towns held by the Catholic League and therefore lawful prize, we took them. They were laden with fish from Newfoundland. We stowed away as much fish as we could hold, sending two back to England, and one with all their crews to France. The seas were pestered with shipping, for the next day we stopped some more. They were from Rotterdam and Emden, bound for La Rochelle, and we dismissed them. A week or more later our look out descried a convoy of no fewer than eleven merchantmen on the horizon. My Lord ordered the *Meg.* to approach them and see what manner of craft they were. As she drew near we saw a flash and a puff of smoke from the admiral of the convoy. The *Meg.* withdrew.

"Mr. Gunner," said my Lord, "stand your men to your guns." We stood with our priming, and our matches burning. Working round to windward, we came within range.

"Shoot across their bows, Mr. Gunner."

"Aye, aye, sir."

We loosed off two demi-culverins. This brought them to strike their topsails. Boats were manned, and their masters came aboard us. They were from Hamburg, Bremen, and Lübeck. When asked for their manifests, they confessed to having certain bags of pepper and bales of cinnamon, consigned by a Jew of Lisbon to his factors (I suppose) in the Hansa ports. This spice, therefore, being lawful

prize, we took to the value of four thousand two hundred pounds at two shillings the pound. The next day the ships were dismissed with the remainder of their cargoes. My prize-money was beginning to grow. We held on our course to the Azores.

One morning in the beginning of August we heard the look-out cry "Land-ho!" It was the island of Saint Michael, towards which we sailed all that day. Towards evening a Spanish ensign was run up to our main-top.

"Spanish flag? What's that for?"

"Stratagems and ruses, boy. What the Frenchies call 'ruse de guerre'."

We came near to the roadstead. Here we spied three small ships at anchor. These my Lord determined to take in the dark of the night. Accordingly at about half-past ten o'clock, our boats were well manned and sent in under the castle walls to cut their cables and hawsers. Soon I heard lamentable cries and splashes. The men that were in them were evidently leaping overboard and swimming to land. There was terrible ado and much shouting on the shore. The castle woke up and began to discharge great shot blindly into the dark. Ere long we heard above the din the splash and rattle of oars. A joyful sound. Our people were towing the three ships unto us. More prizes, laden with wine and oil from Seville.

But we had been at sea for many weeks now. Victual and fresh water were getting low. My Lord decided to furnish himself at the island of Flores. He sent in the boats with a flag of truce, offering to pay in exchange for water, beeves, and sheep, some

of his earnings such as oil or pepper. The islanders were willing, and the deal was done.

We had been lying off the island for some days when Mr. Bramblehook told me that my Lord intended to go for Fayal and hold the town to ransom.

"But when we shall make it I know not. If the wind be not contrary it falleth away altogether. Whistle for a wind, Gunner."

It was, according to my log book, on the 20th of September in the afternoon that we came to Fayal Roads. Immediately my Lord sent Mr. Lister, one of our gentlemen, in a boat to the town to bring back some leading citizens. When these were come aboard the *Victory*, my Lord spoke very shortly to them. I was told that he demanded entrance into the battery, so that he could command the town with the *Victory's* guns. He would do them no injury the while they compounded for a ransom of the town. Otherwise (he said) they must stand to the hazard of war.

It was plain that they refused, for my Lord presently gave orders to man all boats. The soldiers were landed on the sandy shore about a mile and a half to the north of the battery. My Lord himself took command, and forming them into rank marched along the sea-shore upon the sands, as we could plainly see. The gunners in the battery began to play upon them with their great ordnance. I, who had trained my guns upon the battery, had already given the command to open fire, and I ceased not to shoot with my heaviest pieces until the men in the

battery disappeared. Soon the red cross of St. George floated over it.

Fayal was then occupied, and I went ashore. The town contained more than three-hundred good stone-built houses, each with a garden, in which was a cistern or well. In the gardens grew vines and tobacco, pepper and fig-trees, peaches, oranges, and lemons. It was a goodly town, and pity 'twas that many of the soldiers and mariners of the rougher sort drank too much wine and ransacked nearly all the houses. My Lord had strictly forbidden the men to enter into or spoil any house, but he should have had patrols in the streets. He had set sentries over the churches and the friary, which suffered no hurt. We occupied the town for three days until the inhabitants had paid a ransom of two thousand ducats. It was not much among so many of us, but you cannot get blood from a stone nor feathers from a toad. The town was not over-large. I saw the ransom when it came aboard. Much of it seemed to be church plate.

I inspected the captured battery. There were eight and fifty iron pieces, of which twenty-three were ready and mounted upon their carriages. I took possession of all this ordnance and had it carried into the *Victory*.

We then put out to sea again, and one day in the beginning of October took another prize. We hailed her when within earshot.

"What nation are you?"

"Française, française. Vive la France!"

"From what port?"

"De St. Malo."

"He's from St. Malo, my Lord. That's a Catholic League town."

"Tell him he's my prize. What's his cargo?"

"You are my prize. What is your cargo?"

"Des poissons!"

"Says he's full of fish, my Lord."

"Tell him to close me. Put a prize crew aboard and send him into England."

Though our tale of prizes was growing, we still lacked any great booty. We began to have never-ceasing trouble, too, concerning the water supply. The *Victory* lay off St. Mary Island, for my Lord had news that it was a place of no great strength, and we might well water there without much resistance. Our rince and longboat were sent in with an armed party of sixty arquebus-men. The *Victory* was ten miles or more from the shore. We lost sight of the boats long ere they reached the island. They climbed up the long rollers and disappeared down the other side, till at length they altogether vanished from our eyes. In the late afternoon we heard distant shooting. Before night fell the boats reappeared, towing behind them a prize, lately come from Brazil with sugar. Rivers, the master's mate, who was with the party, told me that but for the resolution of Mr. Lister they would not have taken her. Without his encouragement the men would not have gone on. They were flinching and ducking their heads at the shot whistling past their ears from the trenches and barricades on the shore. As it was we lost two men slain and sixteen

wounded, and though we had a prize, yet still there was no water.

We got some water in at St. George's Island at the end of October, but our boats only brought back six tuns, the men swearing that they could get no more. I but half believed this tale. It looked to me as if they got no more of a purpose, so as to force my Lord to go to England, for the men were for the most part fain to be off home. About this time the weather grew rough, and made watering impossible. My Lord gathered the ship's company together.

"My men," he said, "we have taken many prizes, yet we need more to make the voyage a success for the venturers and for yourselves. There are two courses that can be taken. One is to tarry here for more water and look for a further prize hereabouts. The other is to go on half-rations of drink, save for the sick and wounded, and to go by the coast of Spain for England. On our way home we might pick up something. Will he that is willing to take the second course hold up his hand?"

All willingly agreed to a half-allowance and to go for England by way of Spain.

On the last day of October we sent home directly the *Meg* and the *Margaret*. Then we held on our course for Spain with a fair wind and a large. A sail was sighted right before us. We gave chase and quickly overhauled her. She proved to be a ship of a hundred tons burthen, a Portugal from Pernambuco in Brazil, freighted with sugar and Brazil wood. Ten years ago we and the Portugals in Brazil were trading peaceably together, as I have told you.

As usual, we took the chief among her men into the *Victory*, and put a prize crew aboard. A second sugar-laden ship fell to us on the following day, and yet a third, carrying seven hundred hides, sugar, plate, and silver.

So with joy we set sail for England. Merrily before the wind we went, the prizes taking their own road. Though the *Victory's* bottom was very foul with being so long at sea, in twenty-four hours we sailed seven-score English miles.

"We shall be home by Christmas. And what a Christmas we shall keep with prize-money to burn. Nay, we'll be home before the Queen's birthday if the old ship sails like this. We shall see the day's sport in the tilt-yard at Whitehall. What say you, sir?"

"Aye, aye, my lad, mayhap we will," said I, "but I fear the wind be going to change."

It dropped, sure enough, and then rose again from the eastward, the worst of all winds to the homeward bound. Now did they who had been joyful look doleful indeed, for with that wind blowing we were compelled to reduce still further our drink allowance. Only half a pint of water a meal, and that beginning to stink. Yet it was luxury compared to that which followed. Half a pint came to be a quarter, then it failed altogether. At every meal we had but three or four spoonsful of vinegar or the lees of wine to drink, and we continued so for many days. The poor foreigners we had taken had the same allowance as we. We were mightily distressed by the moans of our sick and wounded, crying pitifully

for water. Many of them died. Our company had been so well dured for that there had hardly been any sickness. Now every day some poor body was committed to the deep.

But the 2nd of December in that year 1589 was a day I have never forgotten. For the Lord God sent a good and merciful rain, and we filled our skins and jars and pots. We sweetened the muddy water with a little sugar, and it went merrily down our throats. For all that, I dearly longed for a clear, cool, sweet moorland spring in England, where a man need never be thirsty.

Then storm and tempest fell upon us. One terrible gust tore our mainsail from the yard and blew it overboard away into the sea. The other sails were split and torn almost to ribbons, as you might say. Sea after sea came swooping over the bows, hissing, thundering, green, immense. One especially big wave swept my feet from under me. I flung my arms around a stanchion and clung on, choking. A man was carried past me. He clung for a moment to the rails. Then the sea tore at him and snatched him away. I struggled to shelter. A sea caught us nearly broadside on. We were almost gone and heeled right over. By God's mercy the ship was righted, and the fury of the waves a little abated. Everything movable was carried away or smashed. The galley fire was out long ago.

The weather mended enough for a new mainsail to be made and fastened to the yard, and the other sails to be repaired. No sooner was this done when again the storm broke loose. We all but lost our

new mainsail, and would have done had not Mr. Bramblehook himself saved it. For he did what no man else durst. The mainyard was let down close to the rails. He scrambled along it and gathered the sail out of the sea. Time after time at every roll of the ship he disappeared under water, but he hung on. When the work was done he shook the water out of his ears, and "I would fain die a dry death, my young friends," said he.

Yet the fiercest storm hath an ending. At last the wind served for home, if we had enough drink to make England alive. We had not. One night early in December we spoke an English ship, and begged from her some beer, but we only got enough to carry us to Ireland. We made Ventry harbour, a safe road, thanking God.

So soon as we had anchored, my Lord went himself ashore to get fresh water and to buy victual for his company, notwithstanding he was very weak himself, and sick from the privations he had shared with us all. He and his party returned with a goodly allowance of water, and a noise like a farmyard, the grunting and clucking of hogs and hens, and the bleating of sheep. He also had some casks of beer, but it made us sick, so that we rather drank water. We moved our sick and wounded to a little town near by (I could not get my tongue round the name thereof) to the intent that they might be the more refreshed, and that the surgeon and his mate could attend them more comfortably. Here we, who were half dead with hunger, thirst, and weariness, had our lives restored to us again.

That land was fair and beautiful, and the people kind and loving. Yet the common sort did not seem very industrious; they tilled their fields very ill. If they could provide sufficient to serve from hand to mouth, it was enough. They were a hardy folk. Their small children ran about their streets in mid-winter barefoot and barelegged, often with but one garment. Their houses were mere cabins, usually without chimneys, so that the smoke was very troublesome. Their fuel was turfs. There be many high hills and pleasant streams, with great quantity of stones. They use stones for hedges, as is commonly done in the higher parts of Devonshire.

We sailed away on the 20th of December, and my hard but fortunate voyage was drawing to its end. If all our prizes came safe to port, there would be good pickings for all of us. We held on our course for Plymouth, but with the wind against us were driven so much to leeward that we could not make it. Wherefore over the smooth shining sea floor our ship *Victory* glided into Falmouth haven on the last day of the old year. I fancy she had forgotten her days of tempest, her cold night watches, and the sufferings of her crew. That crew trod at last the long-desired English ground with thankfulness and joy.

When the wind served, we made our way to London. I had made a successful voyage at last. My share of prize-money as master-gunner was some five hundred pounds, all of which in due time I had. I brought my dear wife down to Devonshire

with my money, because (said we) before it be all wasted, we will lay it out to some advantage. And so indeed we did. We bought the goodwill and stock of the shop in Fore Street, Exeter, that sold tobacco and snuff. Your Aun. Elizabeth was well able to care for it. Under her direction it prospered, being in the new fashion of smoking, though owing to the high price of tobacco, it was some few years before we made good profit. I was minded to make two or three more voyages before leaving the sea, while there were still wars with Spain and Portugal, and good prizes to be won. I therefore shipped at Plymouth as master-gunner in the ship *Golden Dragon* for a venture to the East Indies; captain, Mr. Raymond Hampton.

I had hoped that she would prove a happy ship. I liked the master, William Masterman, and when I boarded her she was trim and all a-taunto, with ropes coiled down and gear neatly stowed. But I liked not the hang-dog faces of many of the crew. For the most part they came aboard drunk and singing, with five or six lying helpless in the bottom of the boats. If that had been all, I would have cared little, for your mariner, though drunk ashore, may be sober and a good seaman afloat. It was an insolent air and a troublesome that boded no good.

It was a fresh April day in the year 1591 that we set sail and left the Sound. With a fair wind we came a fortnight later to the Grand Canary in the Fortunate Islands. Always before a fair nor'-easterly breeze we sailed until the middle of May. Then, at about eight degrees from the Line, the wind fell

contrary, and we lay off and on. Scurvy broke out. Two men died. I myself was sick. My teeth were loosened, and I could scarce crawl from my cabin. If that were not grievous enough, we endured a tornado of rain and wind. Those that were hale were drenched for days together, and more sickened. In our extremity the Lord sent us a prize. Two culverin shots made a Portugal caravel ours. She struck sail at once. She was bound for Brazil from Lisbon, and her cargo was more to be desired than much fine gold. For our refreshing and to stay our scurvy there were wine and oil and olives and peas.

Then we crossed the Line, and with the wind often variable, we made for the Cape Buona Esperanza—of Good Hope. The wind was against us to double the Cape, so we bore up with the land to the northward, and entered a goodly bay with an island lying off it, about fifteen leagues from the Cape. Here we abode for the month of August. The sick men (I among them) were still weak, but we had a change from salt victuals, by which we were mightily improved. We shot cranes and geese with our arquebuses, and gathered mussels from the rocks. There was a great store of seals on the island.

One day I was foraging with a small party when we found a man, whom we stayed. His skin was brown, his nose was broad and flat, his hair was black and like wool. He was clad in a sheepskin. I gave him a knife. I then tried to make him understand by signs that he should bring us some cattle. I went down on all-fours, lowing like a cow. He was amazed, and our people laughed. He spoke in a

very quick and jabbering manner, but whether he understood or no I knew not. It seemed that he did, for the next day thirty or forty of these fellows came down to the shore with as many oxen and sheep. For a knife worth threepence we could buy an ox, and for a broken knife a sheep. Thus we revictualled ourselves.

Early in the next month we weighed anchor, doubled the Cape of Buona Esperanza, and passed northwards to Cape Corrientes. Then did disaster fall upon us. The sky grew dark, the wind roared in clapping gusts, rain descended in a flood. Suddenly there was a lull. The wind was shifting. The wet sails flapped noisily. The lashing rain still fell. All at once the gale sprang to life again, and the *Golden Dragon* flew before it under her foresail and fore-topsail. The weather was thick and dark as night, lightning flashed all round. Wet to the skin, all who could went below.

"I remember, Gunner," began the boatswain, who was for ever remembering something, "just such another gale as this in the old *Merchant Royal* out on the Ocean Sea. I thought she was going to founder, indeed I—"

There was a terrible clap of thunder. The whole ship quivered. She trembled fore and aft as if she were about to fall into pieces. We heard shouts and cries of horror, pain, and fear. Smoke poured along the lower deck. For a moment our blood seemed to freeze. Then we rushed for the hatchway and gained the deck. The foremast had been struck by lightning, split, riven, and had fallen over the larboard

bow. The ragged stump of the foremast was ablaze, burning furiously, and hissing as a storm of rain swept along the deck. The ship broached to, dashing men against the bulwarks. All was as dark as night, save for the bright torch of the foremast's stump. Men were lying in all directions dead or insensible from the lightning's shock. The ship was almost on her beam ends, and great waves broke over her. I could see neither the captain nor the master nor the mate. "Carpenters! Axes!" I shouted, and in a few moments three or four of us were hacking at the wreckage. As the ruined foremast fell overside, the master, still dazed, staggered towards us. "The mizen-mast," he said, "cut away the mizen." We with the axes flew to the mizen, and very soon it too had gone. Someone put the helm hard up, and the *Golden Dragon* slowly righted herself; torrents of water pouring overside.

Four men had been slain outright. Others were stricken blind, others were grievously burned, but God be thanked all the hurt recovered. There was no rest that night. All hands were rigging jury-masts and tackle, or toiling at the pumps, while the surgeon tended the men who had been hurt as best he could. The storm blew itself out that night. The galley fire, which had been put out also, was relighted, the ship was pumped dry enough, and our clothing dried on us. Where had been grey waves leaping at us like wolves was rolling blue water with curling white tops to the swinging waves. The sky had cleared. The hot sun poured down upon us while the men caught flying fish for the cooks. We over-

shot Mozambique, and came to anchor in a harbour a few miles to the north.

Here we took a native boat with a Portugal boy in it, and corn and hens and some bales of blue Calicut cloth. The boy we kept with us as an interpreter, and dismissed the blacks and their craft. I noticed that the boat's sail was made of coco-nut leaves.

A few days' sail northwards, when we were about eleven degrees south of the Line, we came unto the island of Comoro, where we abode all November, making new masts, cleaning our ship, pitching and tarring her. This island was exceeding full of people, being Moors and not negroes. We were in great need of water, and the captain sent sixteen men well armed ashore, in our boat. They were not in any way molested. The Moorish chief and some of his men came aboard. We talked to them with the aid of our Portugal boy, and all seemed friendly. Thrice we sent ashore for water with no harm done. But mark the treachery of these infidels. Our master, Mr. William Masterman, saying that it might be long ere we found another good watering-place, went ashore himself with his second mate, the surgeon, and thirty men. The captain warned him to beware of treachery. "Treachery, sir?" said the master. "These Moors be good men. I have no fear of them at all." So the captain let the master go, in our only boat.

About half the party went inland to the spring, and we could see them filling the casks. The remainder piled their arms on the sand, and fell to

washing themselves and their clothes. Suddenly there was an awful yelling and shouting, and a hundred and fifty Moors at the least swarmed out from behind the trees. They attacked Mr. Masterman and our people as they were filling the water-barrels. The Englishmen were cut down, overwhelmed, and slain in a moment. The Moors poured down the beach like a flood or to the men washing. These men flew to their arms, but too late. Some seven or eight saved themselves by swimming. The rest were all killed. All was over so quickly that I could do nothing with my guns during the massacre, but we sent divers great shot among the Moors as they stood shaking their weapons by the brink of the sea. They withdrew then.

"Volunteers to swim out and rescue the boat!" called the captain. A pause. "What? No one?" he said.

"Aye, aye, sir," said I, pulling off my boots. "I'll go."

"I'm with ye, Mr. Heard," said one.

"And I."

"And I."

We four plunged into the sea, and brought back the boat without any hurt from a few shots loosed off at us. This sad mishap was the first event that led to our undoing. The loss of nearly thirty men made the work harder for those that were left. It was not long before there came the first murmurings of discontent. Two good officers, and the surgeon, were also gone. I did not trust our crew, and told the captain so.

Our hearts were heavy as we shaped our course for Cape Comorin, there to lie on the look-out for Portugal ships from Ceylon, Malacca, the coast of China, or even perhaps Japan. Contrary winds and currents drove us far to the northward near Socotra. Howbeit, the wind very luckily went about to the north-west. The monsoon had already set in, and we watched the winds anxiously. The wind came westerly, so that in the month of May we happily doubled Cape Comorin. Past the north of Sumatra we sailed, sometimes in foul and rough weather, sometimes almost becalmed, until we came to the island of Penang, where we stayed in a very good harbour. We landed our many sick, yet twenty-six died in this place. One was John Bowles, our first mate, appointed master in the room of William Masterman, slain in Africa. Another officer gone, and but thirty-three men and a boy left to us. Of these not more than twenty-two were hale and sound.

It was in September of that same year that one day in the morning we espied three ships of about sixty or seventy tons each and overhauled them. They were laden with pepper. We took possession of one, being a Portugal, but let the other two go. This was the first of a number of prizes which began to show a profit to the voyage. Another Portugal fell to us, a ship from Negapatam in South India, of two hundred and fifty tons burthen, with a cargo of pepper and rice for Malacca. After we had taken all we wanted of her, we turned her away with all her crew. Next we took

a ship from Goa. She was a big vessel, and some gunnery work had to be done. We outsailed her, and pumped three shot into her. When her main-yard was cut in two she yielded. Before we could get aboard, all her company, officers, crew, and passengers forsook her in their boats. The crew of the *Golden Dragon* pillaged this Portugal ship in most disorderly fashion, smashing in the cabin doors, appearing on deck clad in proper extravagant fashion in men's hats and women's skirts, stuffing gems and pearls into their pockets, staggering as they walked from drink they had taken, for the ship carried a cargo of palm wine and raisin wine. Captain Hampton gave orders to take the wine from the galleon into our ships, but the men were too drunk with the wine and the excitement of the pillage to give any heed. Wherefore, as soon as our men were come in, he abandoned the galleon and let her drive to sea.

In December we turned back to Ceylon to a place called Punta del Galle. "Pipe all hands aft," said the captain. We were indeed a sorry few. He spoke to us.

"Look here, men. I mean to stay here so we can catch the Portuguese ships coming from the eastward. They come in, you may know, to fill up the big carracks that ply to Lisbon. We shall do well to stay."

The crew would have none of it. The captain was a sick man, and they knew it. "Take us home," they said. The carpenter was as mutinous as any of the mariners.

"We will take our course for England, sir," he

said, "whether you will or no. We will stay here no more. We are very few, and have been out long enough."

Captain Hampton, so ill that he could hardly stand, gave way. My little Captain Drake would have died rather than consent to abandon his plan. But he was never ill.

So in December 1592 we sailed for the Cape of Good Hope. We were much p'agued with contrary winds, and it was long before we could double the Cape. It was not until April in the year 1593 that we reached the island of St. Helena. Here we rested for two weeks, enjoying green figs, oranges, and lemons, with abundance of fresh meat and water. Captain Hampton, now recovered but being still dissatisfied with the results of the voyage, set a course, so he told me, for Pernambuco in Brazil. Some of the men, perceiving that we were on a more westerly course than would take us straight home, came to the captain and said that unless they went directly home, they would lay their hands to nothing and would refuse duty. Thereupon he altered course, but by reason of calms and contrary winds we were constrained to go for the West Indies. Our victuals were running short, and the men were daily growing more sour and mutinous. In June we came to the island of Mona. Here was a French ship of Caen in Normandy, whose captain was a Monsieur Charles de la Barbotière.

Captain Hampton called me to his cabin. "Sit down, Mr. Heard," he said. "As you know, we have not made a good profit for the owners on this voy-

age. We are short-handed, and the men are almost in open mutiny. If I go not home, I shall not be obeyed, but I am bound to say that it is doubtful, seeing what the men's present temper is, whether I shall ever reach home in this ship. I want you to take passage to Europe with Monsieur de la Barbotière, and tell the owners the whole story. You know them, Messrs. Westwood and Manning, of Philpot Lane, Eastcheap, in the City of London. Tell them that I shall do my best to bring the ship safe home, but that through ill-fortune and an unruly company, I can do no more."

"But I cannot leave you like this, sir," I said. "To forsake you in this peril, I cannot do it."

"I wish you to do so, Heard," replied the captain. "The acting master is a loyal man, so is the boatswain, and I can count on a few of the men. You'll see me in London Town one of these fine days, I hope. I go for England now, you for France and then England. I will ask the Frenchman to take you. I am sure he will. He is a friendly soul."

You may guess that I did not like the command, but I obeyed. I parted from Captain Hampton at the end of August 1593, but for one reason or another of trade Monsieur de la Barbotière did not leave Hispaniola until November. We sailed northwards for about three weeks. I was asleep in my *hamaco* at midnight about the middle of December when there was a tremendous shock and noise, and I was rolled out on to the bare boards. The *Hirondelle* had struck, owing, as was afterwards made known, to the negligence of the ship's pilot officer.

He had assured the captain that we were nowhere near any land, yet we had run full upon a rock. Water poured in and I rushed up on deck. Till day broke the seas pounded at the ship. She was full of water and fain to split. We found a dawn that we were really many miles from land; we could see it afar off. But we were fast upon a rock with high cliffs. A boat and a raft were launched. Being an Englishman among some fifty Frenchmen, of which only half could be taken by the boat and the raft, I did not press forward, but abode in the ship. She was almost gone, and I prepared myself to die. But Captain de la Barbotière in the boat alongside, seeing me standing apart, called on me to jump and save myself, which I presently did, and was hauled aboard. We left a part of our company, poor souls, to the mercy of the sea.

I being but a stranger, it had pleased God to set me apart as one of those to be saved, I hoped to His service. I took my turn at the oars. We rowed all day for the island in the distance, sad at heart for our forsaken comrades, that must quickly have been choked in the pitiless sea. It was nearly dark before our boat, towing the raft, reached the shores of the island, which, so far as we could tell, was one of the Bermudas. Our throats were very dry, we having been all day without drink. Wherefore we scattered on landing to seek freshets of water, but found naught save good store of rain-water in a weedy pond. The island was four or five miles long and about half as broad. It was full of goodly cedar-trees. Before leaving the ship the captain had caused

the carpenter's tools to be saved, with plenty of rope and some sailcloth. But for this foresight, I should not be telling you this story.

We lived for nearly five months on that island, eating fish and tortoises, and drinking pond water. Trees were felled, and a small bark of perhaps eighteen tons was built, pegged with wood, for we had very few nails. Instead of pitch, we made lime and mixed it with the oil of tortoises, and I and another did plaster the mortar with small sticks into the seams. Being by now the month of April, the weather was fine and hot, so that the mortar hardened like a stone so soon as we laid it on. We made two great chests and caulked them well, filling them with rain-water as provision for the voyage. We purposed to go for Newfoundland, and we took thirteen large live tortoises for victual.

In May 1594, to the no little joy of all, God's fair wind filled our sails, and we passed clear of the island. Ere long we fell in with the land near Cape Breton, and took in wood, water, and ballast. A fair country this, with rare good soil and much woods. From thence we ran for the Newfoundland Banks, where were many ships, French and English, all a-fishing. We hailed a French ship, and torrents of French flowed. They agreed to take our men back home to France, and said that there was a bark of Falmouth lying near by, and that they would send me, the Englishman, over in a boat to speak with her.

As the ship's boat rocked and danced over the waves towards the Falmouth bark, I saw, leaning

over the side a figure that it seemed I knew. "As I live," said a voice, "'tis Gunner Heard. So you've not been home with the news after all. Where have you been to all these months?" said Captain Hampton, late of the *Golden Dragon*. "Coming home with us? Of course. I have nine men here, and Captain Trevethick, of Falmouth, picked us up three days ago. Come along, I'll bring you to him."

He told me his story. "After you left we had contrary winds for England, and drifted about among the islands picking up a store of victuals, and hoping for a fair gale. One day we had landed to forage, leaving the carpenter with eight men and a boy in charge of the ship. I was never sure of that carpenter. We were two or three days looking for food, and having found a little, came down to the shore intending to hail the ship to send us the boat. To my amazement my ship had vanished. The carpenter must have cut the cable, leaving ten of us on the island with no boat."

"But what devil possessed him?" I asked. "Where would he go? What could he do? He was sure to be cast away sooner or later."

"God knoweth. Turn pirate, maybe. There we were, destitute. We lived scantily for months on that island. One day, when we were in despair of rescue, we espied a sail. We always had a beacon fire ready, and we set it alight. The captain of the ship saw us, took in his topsails, bore with the land, and showed French colours. Coming along to the western end of the island he anchored. We raced along to meet him. He sent in a boat and took us off. For more months

we traded among the islands, and it was only a few days ago that the Frenchman transferred us to the Falmouth bark. I and the boatswain here and eight men, and you, are all that's left of the *Golden Dragon*. I shall have a sorry tale for the owners, if God send us a prosperous journey home with all this fish."

It was high summer before I saw my dear wife again; I think she had almost despaired of me. I settled down with her to selling tobacco in Exeter, and thought again that I had done with the sea. But when the next spring wore round, the old fret came over me. Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth the sailor for the sea. She useth him cruelly, scorches, freezes, parches, starves, and perhaps in the end chokes him, but she has him fast in her arms, even though she betray him at the last.

CHAPTER X

THE LOST LEADERS

IN the spring of the year 1595 it began to be rumoured in Exeter that those two most famous knights, Sir John Hawkins and Sir Francis Drake, were making ready a great armada for some special service. The merchants of Exeter knew of it, and coming in to buy tobacco, told me that they would have at least eight Queen's ships, the Lord knew how many privateers, and thousands of mariners and soldiers. A traveller came in from London. He had the story from there. The tale was buzzing round the Royal Exchange, the wine-shops and tobacco-shops, and in Mr. Lloyd's coffee-house you heard men speak of the new adventure. There are so many foreigners in London that I doubt not it was all over Europe, and certain it is that the King of Spain did know. But no man knew for sure whither the expedition was bound. Some swore confidently that it was for Lisbon, others said Cadiz, some averred that it was to raid the Main, others that it would take the treasure fleet in the Azores.

I could not rest with this storm brewing, and against my wife's wishes I rode to Plymouth to see Sir John, who had always been my good friend. Sir Francis, whom I still thought of as my little captain, I had not had the good fortune to see for many a

year. He was now very much the fine gentleman, had married Mistress Elizabeth Sydenham, held lands and fat manors. I knew not whether he would remember the boyish companion of his side to London in his young days. It was therefore to Sir John I went, to his house in Plymouth. Sir John looked old and worn and somewhat weary. The cares of admiralty had left their mark. His cheeks were hollow and his beard was grizzled, but he still had a touch of his old hearty manner.

"What's all this-ye 'bout great doings 'gainst the Spaniards, sir?" I asked. "Will 'ee have room for a master-gunner when you sail? I have served you ashore, and would fain do the like afloat."

"The whole world knoweth of this venture, Hearst. 'Tis a pity folk cannot keep quiet tongues in their heads. You shall come, of course. Us'll be glad to have 'ee. To my own ship I have promised Will Busbridge, one of the last from the old days at San Juan. Ye remember him? So why not see Sir Francis? He and I are joined together as generals for this army. You served with him at San Juan. Recruiting has not yet begun in earnest, and it may be he'll have a place for you. If he hath not, us'll find ye a berth somewhere. You can ride up over to Buckland Abbey to see him, or better, meet him on the Hoe almost any one of these fine mornings. You will know him by the rich company he keeps," said Sir John, a little bitterly. "But he'll not eat ye. Whatever men say against Francis Drake, he'll not refuse speech with an old shipmate."

So, well pleased, I departed for the Hoe. Sure

enough, seated on a bench overlooking the Sound's blue water, where divers tall ships lay at anchor, and where the gulls were swooping and crying. I saw my man, one of the most famous in all England. He was richly dressed, with a ruff and silken doublet, and the sword the Queen had given him. His fair hair and beard were streaked with grey, and he was stouter than of old, but there were the same keen merry eyes, the same firm mouth. He was surrounded by a band of gallants no less sumptuous than himself, with cloaks of satin and thigh boots. One frowned as I approached, another smiled, but I cared naught for them.

"Sir Francis, Sir Francis," I said, "do 'ee remember now, twenty-seven years ago, a boy riding with you to London after we had come back from San Juan d'Ulua? Name of Jonathan Heard? I've been in the Turkish galleys since then, and the Spaniards' bloody Inquisition, and escaped to sail the seas all the world over. I've been master-gunner with my Lord of Cumberland, and many another. I know my trade. May I sail with you once more, for the sake of old days? Gunner to the admiral I'd be, sir, no less."

"God's life, Heard! Shake hands with me, man. Do I remember ye? It were a pretty business searching for 'ee. My masters, one of my oldest shipmates. Aye, they were the days. I wiped out that score with Spain, sure enough. And now for another smack at the Dons, hey? My flag-captain is not yet appointed, but I have a master named. See him and say I sent you. If you'm accepted for master-gunner, be here

in six weeks. You can help in getting crews together."

Sir Francis rose with a smile as I thanked him, and with his friends strode back to his town house to dinner. He had given me the master's name, which was Matthew Brinscombe of Plymouth. I saw this man, who on perceiving Sir Francis' writing, was very civil. I easily satisfied him, and returned to Exeter for a space. The Queen's ships were most of them at Deptford or at Chatham. The *Defiance* was to be Sir Francis' flagship, the *Garland* that of Sir John Hawkins. As the ships were made ready for sea, they sailed for the meeting-place at Plymouth, where they completed their stores and their crews. I therefore joined *Defiance* when she came to Plymouth in June.

A gallant company was assembled there. Six Queen's ships were flying the green-and-white ensign and the flag of Saint George. Under that same red cross were twenty-one other ships and barks, with in all 2,500 men-at-arms and mariners. Sir Thomas Baskerville was the officer commanding the soldiers. Men said he had done good work in the Flanders wars. He proved himself a fighting man at sea. The men were ready by the end of June, but yet we did not move. The contractors were slow in providing our full store of victuals. Each day's delay made matters worse, for hungry men afloat and ashore were eating up the victual that should have been consumed in the expedition. I had good store of powder and shot, and so I suppose had the rest.

In July there was great expectation of an early

start. Sir Francis had written to the Queen's Council. I saw the courier leave Plymouth with the letter, and I doubt not that Drake implored the Council to send the sailing orders. There was nothing Sir Francis hated more than to sit idle when all was ready. He came aboard many times, and always stamped up and down swearing. He had been ashore for years. I think he felt that the enterprise was endangered by delay, but also he longed to be at sea upon his proper trade. Perhaps we would have sailed at the end of that month, had not a pinnace come in from the west with news for the generals. Four Spanish galleys had appeared off the Cornish coast, had landed some hundreds of soldiers, and burnt three fishing villages, Mousehole, Newlyn, and Penzance. They had re-embarked their men and made off, and were half-way back to Spain ere this.

The news was all over the fleet in an hour, and of course had to be reported to London. It so happened that Sir Francis was aboard and in his cabin when the pinnace came alongside, and a volley of oaths went out through the open door. It was an impertinence for which he swore he would make the Spaniards pay, but unhappily the news lent strength to the rumours going about that they were intending a landing in Ireland, and so there was more delay. Orders came to cruise off the Irish coast, to cruise in the Ocean Sea to catch the plate fleet, but never the orders to sail for the Main. When the generals were almost in despair, yet refusing to be diverted, positive news reached London that a Spanish galleon full of treasure was lying a wreck at

San Juan de Puerto Rico. That at last brought the sailing orders for the Indies. I see from my log-book that it was in the afternoon of Thursday the 25th of August, 1595, that the fleet weighed anchor.

The generals' standing orders for the voyage enjoined the whole armada "not to omit divine worship twice a day." Morning and evening prayer was usual in the Royal ships, but in the privateers it was not always observed. Gambling was forbidden in the ships because of the quarrels usually resulting, but naught was said about swearing. To cease from swearing was (I suppose) too much to ask from sailors and fighting men at sea. There were most careful instructions about keeping station. 'Twould have been well if the instructions had been better heeded, as will be seen hereafter. Signals by gun-shot, and indeed all things requisite, were laid down by our valiant and wise commanders.

We anchored again that night in Cawsand Bay. We pulled up our hooks next morning, set sail and stood sou'-west all day. At dawn on Monday Land's End bore nor'-west, and then we set ~~a~~ course sou'-west and by south. The weather was bright, the sea wind strong. It hummed through the rigging, leapt in my throat and slammed against my body. All those days councils were held in *Defiance* and in *Garland*. Matters were not smooth, and 'twas said that high words passed between the generals. Rumour had it that Sir John Baskerville composed their differences. Likely enough. I knew not the causes of the quarrel, but in the event it was decided to go for the Canaries. On the way we picked

up two small Flemish flyboats bound for the Barbary coast. We carried them along with us for many days before dismissing them, lest they should give us away to the enemy. The enemy knew all about us, as was in due time made clear. The King of Spain's spies were in London, and weeks before we left Plymouth had learnt our strength and object. We discovered all this later from prisoners that we took.

At the end of September we came to Las Palmas in the Grand Canary, and anchored off the town. Fourteen hundred soldiers were made ready to embark in boats, and the smaller ships carrying them stood in closer to the shore. Sir Francis ordered his barge out to overlook the defences himself. As he and two of his gentlemen were lowering themselves into the barge he shouted to me, "Come along, Gunner, we want you." I jumped in. "Give way," bawled the coxswain, and the men bent to their oars. There was a sandy bay between the fort and the town, which promised good landing. We pulled towards it. As we approached within saker shot, we could see that a breastwork had been built near the shore with what were unmistakably trenches commanding the beach. Sir Francis stood up for a better view. There was a flash from the breastwork, a report, and a ball came bounding across the water, slapping into the tops of the waves with a *smack* and a shower of spray. It passed us to starboard. We were now within long musket range. A crackle of fire came from the trenches, and in a moment they were wreathed in smoke. Some shot fell short,

others sang past our heads. Sir Francis was in no wise disturbed, but one or two of the oarsmen flinched and ducked their heads.

Sir Francis gave the signal for retirement and the barge swung round. He swore quietly for a moment, then said to his flag-captain, "Well, Stratford, there must be five or six hundred men in those trenches, besides all the horsemen in the rear. Sir John would never risk a landing here. This time Sir John would be right. Likely enough, too, the boats wot'd be swamped in that sea. What say you, Guflner?" As he spoke, another round shot came from the land battery, a little short, but too close for comfort.

"That piece is well served, sir," said I. "There are others there, and the ordnance from the fort will have to be reckoned with. Those transports are rather close inshore. The fort has held her fire until now——"

Boom! Boom! Boom! The fort was a-firing. There was a splintering crash and a shout. "The *Hope's* hit, by heaven!" Sir Francis cried out. As we passed the *Phoenix* he called to them to weigh anchor, and to pass the word. As the ships were getting their anchors up, they loosed off their pieces, but the transports were lightly armed, and the rolling made shooting difficult. They stood off again towards the great ships, and so ended that enterprise.

The attack on Las Palmas was given up, but we had to water somewhere. The fleet therefore made for the western end of the island. We got in our water without having to fight for it, yet not without loss. An officer, with the surgeon of the *Solomon*

and a handful of men, climbed to the top of the hill overlooking the bay. They were surprised by a party of herdsmen with staves. The officer and most of the men were slain, and the surgeon taken prisoner. We had no doubt that he was put to the torture, and gave away all that he knew about our voyage.

At ten o'clock on the night of the 28th of September the whole fleet set sail, and stood away south-west and south-south-west till we reached the latitude of the Cape Verde Islands. Day after day we sailed in fair weather with a strong nor'-easterly breeze, for we were in what the Spaniards call the Ladies' Gulf, where storms come but seldom. The sea was a deep, deep blue. Every sunrise was a fiery golden glory, as the sun leapt into the sky. Each eve, his day's work done, he plunged into the reddening sea. The night suddenly shook her mantle over us, and the stars glittered and blazed.

We altered course for the West Indies, and ere long came stormy weather. A gale was blowing and a heavy sea running. The decks were awash. We watched our consorts rolling, with cascades of white water pouring from them. By darkness that night we were in the thick of the storm. In the morning we counted five other ships of the fleet besides ourselves, and though we strained our eyes staring all round the heaving wilderness of waters we could see no more. At the end of October we sighted the island of Marie Galante, and came to an anchor a saker shot off the shore. We did a little trade in fruits with the natives, but did not tarry. We came to Guadeloupe, and anchored close inshore on the

•
•

south side of the island, beneath a mighty high mountain. That day Sir John Hawkins and the rest of the fleet joined us.

I say the rest of the fleet, but one ship was missing. The *Francis*, a bark of thirty-five tons, either by negligence or ill-hap, had lagged behind Sir John's squadron, and had been cut off and taken by five Spanish frigates or zabras of two hundred tons each. These were the new fast treasure ships. The zabras had seen the rest of the squadron afar off, and by means of persuasion and torture there would be no secrets left to us. Sad news. Sir Francis went over to the *Garlanda* as soon as she arrived, and returned with a troubled face. He spoke loudly and quickly to Captain Stratford, Sir Nicolas Clifford, and Mr. Brown, who crowded round, eager for his tidings.

"Spaniards have taken *Francis*. Only hope of surprise, I said, was to go hard for San Juan de Puerto Rico before they can make all ready for us. Hawkins is sick, sick unto death, I fear. He will not move till the ships be trimmed and scraped, and water taken in. So here we must stay for three days. Can we clean ship in three days? We must, by heaven!"

It may have been wise to stay, but this was not my little captain of old. Once he would have sailed immediately for Puerto Rico, leaving the laggards behind. Was he also sick? Sick at heart, I believe. We watered here at Guadeloupe, trimmed our ships, and gave the soldiers room to stretch their legs. They rejoiced. They sat on the sands, they put feathers in their hair like the Indians, they ran races, they

played like children with the shells, they swam and splashed in the sea. They became as brown as pine nuts.

Four days later the fleet stood away nor'-west and by north, and sailed among the islands, with the dark sea heaving beneath a blazing golden sun. It was on the night of the 12th of November that we came to anchor off the great island of Puerto Rico. Sir Francis left in his barge for the *Garland*. He was soon back.

"What news, sir?" asked Captain Stratford.

"Sir John Hawkins is dead, gentlemen. May God rest his soul. He died as I entered into his cabin. They are burying him at dawn."

I need not tell you I was deeply grieved. For thirty years I had known Mr. Hawkins, Captain Hawkins, S. John Hawkins. He had served his Queen and country all the days of his life, and he had been very kind to me. I slept little that night, and was at hand when Sir Francis with his officers called for his barge before the dawning of the day.

"May I come, sir?" I asked. "I have served him for years in London and in Devonshire."

"Certainly. Come along, Heard," replied the general

We dropped Sir John overside with heavy hearts as the morning sun rose triumphantly in the sky. The *Garland's* chaplain read the committal service over him, but by Sir Francis' order no guns spoke to give him a last salute. We were too near the harbour of San Juan. Although there was no hope

of a complete surprise, yet it would have been imprudent to give to the enemy particular notice of our presence. The ship's trumpets shrilled out a farewell, and the drums beat. Sir Thomas Baskerville stayed aboard the *Garland* as Lieutenant-General, and stood uncovered as Sir Francis departed for the *Defiance*.

At about two o'clock we anchored in a sandy bay about two miles from the town of San Juan, out of range (so we thought) of the forts along the shore. In the evening, while the general and the other gentlemen were seated at supper in the cabin and the viols and hautboys were playing, the forts began to shoot. At first all their shot fell short into the sea, but I noticed that they were sending over great shot from heavy pieces, and I began to fear lest they should get the range. I ran up to the general's cabin and knocked.

"Ah, Heard, come in. They'm making a great noise yonder. I was thinking that perhaps we should move. Was that what you were about to say? Boy, a cup of wine for Mr. Heard."

Before I could speak there was a tremendous crash, and the cabin was full of great flying splinters. Sir Francis had disappeared. I scrambled round to his end of the table, and found him rising to his feet, his chair tiven from under him and smashed to bits.

"Are you hurt, sir?" I asked.

"Not at all, not at all. Brutus—Oh, Brutus

He fell on his knees before the dead body of Mr. Brutus Brown, whom I knew he loved. A jagged

sliver of wood had pierced Mr. Brown's eye and his brain. I rushed for the door and shouted. "Pass the word for the surgeons!" I turned back to where a man lay groaning on the floor.

"Who else, Stratford? You're hurt yourself, aren't you? Heard, tell the master to weigh if he has not already begun, and shoot off a piece as a signal to the fleet."

We set sail hurriedly and stood to the eastward.

At midnight we tacked about to the west, and by morning came to anchor a little to the westward of the bay. As the day drew towards evening twenty-five pinnaces and boats were loaded with soldiers, and mariners at the oars. Each boat took firepots and calivers and some small brass pieces. Sir Francis went in the leading pinnace, and I went with him. When night fell, we began to row for the bay. We knew that the five frigates were in the harbour. The plan was to cut them out and capture them, trusting that in the darkness and confusion the guns of the forts would do us little harm.

There was not a sound as we led the way in but the click and splash of our oars and the swirl of the rippling water. Yet they must have heard us. Why did they not shoot? They could see naught. A hasty command, and our oarsmen backed water and shipped their blades with a rattle. There was much whispered cursing forward. The news flew back that the Spaniards had sunk a great ship in the channel. This meant that we could not tow out the frigates even if we could capture them. We could

row round the obstacle. We did so till we could see the frigates' masts against the sky and dimly make out their hulls.

"If we cannot take the frigates, we will burn them," said my little 'captain. Our boats began to sling firebombs. Instantly by the glare of the burning bombs the frigates began to shoot with arquebuses and light pieces. The Spaniards were ready for us. They put out many of the fires, but one frigate, the nearest, was fairly ablaze. She flared away into the night, and our people cheered. But she lit up the whole harbour as if it were day. The boats were revealed, the firelight falling on the white faces of the crews. Immediately the castle and the forts began to spray us with great shot. The fight became hot. For an hour we fought back with all our pieces. I myself worked our bow gun. It was an unequal battle. There were scores of brass pieces in the frigates, and the shore batteries cut us up cruelly. We were an easy mark by the light of the burning ship. Sir Francis blew his whistle, and we made ready to withdraw. There were many dead and dying in the pinnace. The force lost in all forty or fifty slain and very many wounded, and all we had done was to destroy one ship, damage two more, and kill a few Spaniards.

We still rode at anchor. Sir Francis had discovered by sounding during the fight that there was a channel of deep water between the block-ship and the shore, and I think that he would have tried again the next night, but for what a 'scouting pinnace saw the next morning. The Spanish com-

mander was too good for us. He had sunk the biggest frigate in the gap.

Sir Francis held a council in the *Defiance*. Captain Strafford told me what was decided. Sir Francis, as general, was for abandoning the attempt on San Juan, and for sending a force overland to Panama. "Let us see what the soldiers can do on their feet," he had said. I was startled at this plan. My little captain had not yet lost his daring, but I for one was somewhat afraid. There seemed to be a curse on this expedition. The attack on San Juan had been daring, but there was no denying it had failed.

We sailed away for the Main, and the Spaniards were glad to see the Dragon go. At midnight on the last day of November the fleet came to anchor under Cape de la Vela. All this month of December was spent in taking and burning the towns on the Main, Rio de la Hacha and the rest, but there was no booty and no ransom. The towns were empty, swept clean. The Spaniards were always ready and forewarned. Should we ever take Panama? I, and I think many of the officers, began to doubt.

The enemy made some show of resistance at Nombre de Dios, which we occupied ten days after spending Christmas at sea. Here again the town was empty of pillage. Thence Sir Thomas Baskerville with seven hundred and fifty picked men, set out on the march to Panama. I sought leave to go with them. I soon wished that I had not. It was the first time I had gone a-soldiering, and may it be the last! The hunger, the thirst, the weariness of marching in the heat with armour and weapons, the rain,

the flies, and the mud, all had to be endured with constant attacks and shootings from an unseen enemy. The road by which we marched was very narrow and cut out of the tropical forest. In the thickets on either hand lurked ambushes of Spaniards or Indians with arquebus or arrow. We lost men in twos and threes all our way out and back again. After we had wearily marched thus for more than two days and covered perhaps ten leagues, the country opened out for a space at the foot of a hill. The head of the column halted to let the men behind come up. As we were deploying, we were shot at from the top of the hill, where had been built a stockaded fort. There was a strong force of Spaniards in it. Before we were aware of them some twenty or more of us were killed and many hurt. The quartermaster-general and Mr. Williams, one of Her Majesty's Bodyguard, were among the slain. My wrist was grazed by a bullet. We made haste to take cover amid the trees in our rear. •

Here, when out of range, Sir Thomas held a council. Soon we had the order to retreat. The captain of my company told me that Indians had reported that there were two more forts like that one, too strong to storm, before reaching Panama.

"And Panama knows we are coming, and is prepared to make matters hot for us. If we have to fight our way there our victual will be spent long before we arrive. The bread and the biscuits are all soaked. Mine is, and I suppose yours too. We are on short rations now. Besides, how can we fight? This accursed rain hath drowned our powder and ruined

our matches. Better return while some of us are alive, say I."

So we staggered back, very hungry, soaked to the skin, shivering with sickness. I shall never forget the face of Sir Francis as I boarded the *Defiance*. He had seen us arrive. All the mirth had gone from his eyes for ever. Failure stared at him, failure at last.

When the new year came in we sailed westward. I knew not whither we were bound or what we were to do, but the wind turned contrary, and as if in despair, the general gave the order to run before the wind, eastwards to Puerto Bello.

You could smell death in the damp, sickly air. Men were dying fast. Each day a body, or two bodies, were lowered overside from all the ships. Some of the smaller vessels were discharged and sunk, for they were old and leaky, and the Queen's ships needed sailormen. Ere we anchored at Puerto Bello, Sir Francis, who these latter days had paced the deck continually with a grim face, speaking hardly to any man, began to keep his cabin, complaining of a scouring or flux. For ten days or more we saw him not. Soon he began to talk wildly. Captain Stratford sent word over to Sir Thomas Baskerville, who came in from the *Garland*, and also Captain Bodenham. Sir Francis' brother, Mr. Thomas Drake, was already with him. I did not go to my hammock that night. About three o'clock in the morning I heard to my amazement the loud and confident voice of the Frankie Drake of long ago. I hastened to the cabin door and met Captain Stratford coming out.

"That was the general's voice, sir?" I asked. "What meaneth it? Is he on the mend?"

"I know not what to think, Mr. Heard. He started up on a sudden, and shouted in a clear, strong voice to his page to bring him his body armour. 'If I am to die,' said he, 'dress me in my harness that I may die like a fighting man.' They are even now appareling him. Here is the surgeon. How now, master-surgeon, will the general live?"

The surgeon shook his head. "The last flicker of strength," he said. "He is as weak as water, and the flux is still on him, wasting him away."

I stood by for another dark hour. Thomas Drake's son, Sir Francis' page, came to the door.

"Oh, come in, Mr. Heard," he said. "The general was asking for you; his oldest shipmate, he said you were."

I entered, and stood among the captains. Sir Francis was lying on the bed, dressed as for battle. His sword, the sword the Queen had given him, dangled to the floor. Sir Thomas Baskerville held his morion. I fell on my knees beside the bed, with the tears running down. Frankie (for so we used to speak of him among ourselves), moved his hand, and the shadow of a smile was on his face. Presently he drew a last shuddering breath, and yielded up his spirit quietly to his Maker.

We buried him in the sea the next morning. All the captains in the fleet assembled in the *Defiance*. Two hulks that had been condemned lay to leeward, and after the sermon by Mr. Bride, the chaplain, they were set on fire. The flames crackled fiercely.

and two great plumes of smoke arose and soared and hung in the calm sky. The solemn guns uttered the last salutes. As the coffin slid down into the blue water, the drummer beat a roll on Sir Francis Drake's own drum, and the trumpets sounded, mournfully at first, expressing our grief, then mounting higher and higher into triumphant song.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life. . . ."

The sea he loved will keep him safe till Judgment Day.

CHAPTER XI

NO MORE SEA

BY wounds and sickness we had lost five hundred men. Early in February, having repaired our ships and made new sails, we left that graveyard and with Sir Thomas Baskerville as our new general we sailed north for England, thinking that we might meet with a Spanish fleet on the way through the islands. Three weeks later, near Cape Corrientes at the western end of Cuba, as we were standing in to get fresh water, we espied a fleet of about twenty sail. *Spaniards!* We cleared for action, saw to the loading of our ordnance, and stood by. As soon as they descried us they kept close upon a tack, thinking to get to windward. Our masters were true seamen, and we weathered them.

When our admiral, with all the rest of the fleet, was right in the wind's eye of them, Sir Thomas put out the Queen's arms in the *Garland*, and with trumpets sounding merrily, and flags and ensigns and streamers flying, led the way to the attack. *Concord* opened the fight on our side, for the biggest Spanish ship put two great shot into her, which the *Concord* immediately repaid. The *Elizabeth Bonaventure* then bore full with her, giving her such a broadside that she sheered off with her sides all torn. This much was plain, but then the battle smoke came down upon us, and we saw naught but what

was our instant concern. The *Defiance* was right in the midst of the Spanish fleet, and so I had both broadsides engaged. Our gunners worked like demons in the stifling heat. Through the swirling smoke in the dim gun-decks I could see their bare white backs streaked with black from the powder as they bent to the reload and the ramming, or sponged out the reeking barrels. On the upper decks top the fight went merrily. The light pieces were being well served, and our soldiers also were valiantly using caliver and arquebus.

By God's providence and the poor and feeble shooting of the Spaniards our loss was marvellous small, a few soldiers, and down below one gun's crew slain or hurt by a great shot that came through the side near the port and struck the piece. Splinters wounded three or four more. Most of our shot got home, look-so-to-me, though the smoke hung thick. Once as it drifted away for a moment I could see gaping holes in the Spaniard. For two hours or more the fight continued, until at sunset the enemy drew off to stop his leaks. We carried on our course to the westward. The parched gunners croaked as they tried to speak.

"Water, boy! Water, for mercy's sake!"

"That's better! Here, let me lie down."

"No, sponge her through first."

"'Twas plaguey hot, Will. But we hammered the Dons good and proper."

"Aye. Didst see our roundshot biting and the white splinters fly?"

"It's perishing¹ dark down here, and I'm so black as a God-forgotten chimney-sweeper."

"Kick me awake when the victuals come."

That night, by the light of the moon, we saw a mighty smoke arise from one of their great ships, and soon a great glare. We watched her burn to the water's edge. All the next day we had sight of the enemy to windward, but they showed little will to fight or come near us. We kept on our course west and by north till at about six o'clock they faded from our sight. This battle put us in better spirits for our sad homecoming. *Defiance* was the last ship home to Plymouth. The bells did not peal for any of us. The bells of Madrid and Seville and Cadiz were ringing with the news that the Dragon at last was taking his long rest beneath the blue waters of the Caribbean Sea.

The joy-bells of Spain did not ring for long. We came to Plymouth in time to see sail the great armada of my Lord Essex, my Lord Howard, and Sir Walter Raleigh that went to sack the city of Cadiz. I myself witnessed, the day after our landing, the last parade of the soldiers marching past their generals. Never have I seen such force, and I marvelled at their stature, their martial bearing, their exercises, and their furniture.* Surely a finer army had never left England. I know that we could not match them in these evil days. There were seventeen splendid galleons Royal, with a multitude of well-armed merchantmen from London, and Hollanders too, strong enough to abide the proudest

* Their arms and their equipment

fleet that ever swam. I saw them go with pride. They would avenge our lost leaders, our admirals lying dead in distant seas.

I was with my good wife in Exeter from June to September, 1596. The late voyage had brought disaster upon us and no plunder at all. I was uneasy in my mind about the business of the tobacco. The high price thereof made sales something slow, and despite the entreaties of my poor wife I swore I would make one last voyage. We always had all the news and gossip from London and Bristol in the shop, and one day I heard that Mr. Raymond Hampton was appointed admiral of a venture victualled and provided by some worshipful merchants of London. He had been a good friend to me, and though he had been sick on our last voyage and his men had not joined, I knew in my heart that he was a good officer, and that I would gladly sail with him again. I wrote him a letter and sent it post. In due time I had an answer, instructing me to come without delay to the ship *Goodwill*, two hundred and forty tons, then being fitted out at Blackwall in London River. This I presently did, and found there two more ships, the *Paul*, one hundred and seventy tons, and the *Lady*, of sixty tons burthen. Mr. Edmund Barking, of London, was captain of the *Paul*, and the master of the *Goodwill* was one Timothy Bundler, a man of about thirty-five years, portly in habit, with a cheerful manner, his face lined with long watches at sea, and pitted like mine with smallpox, though not so badly. We had in all two hundred and seventy-five men and boys.

Being fully furnished with all that was needful, we departed from Blackwall in October 1596. The owners, two aldermen of the City of London, with other merchants, came to the quay-side to bid us God-speed. They came aboard, and with the officers drank to the voyage. There was a goodly number of parents, sweethearts, and wives to cheer us on our way. As we cast loose, the trumpeters sounded a merry peal, the musicians began to play, and we cheered again and again. The answering shout of the watchers on shore faded into silence as the ships gathered way.

We ran along the coast with a fair wind until we came to the West Country. After leaving Torbay behind us, we ran into great gusts and storms and contrary winds. The *Paul* lost her mainmast and put into Dartmouth for repairs. We followed, and on the last day of November, all in order once again, we crossed the harbour bar and ran before a pleasant gale.

Not for long. The wind backed right round. In a storm of rain and hail we lost both the *Paul* and *Lady*. We carried on to the Canaries, hoping to meet them there, but to our dismay they were still missing when we came in sight of Tenerife. Here early in the morning we espied a ship, entirely becalmed under the shore, being towed by a boat. We manned our longboat with armed men, and pulled towards her. The Spaniards, seeing us come, abandoned ship and tumbled into their boats, and our men took possession of her without any resistance. She was laden with eighty tuns of Canary wine,

which came to us not before it was welcome. We kept and manned this prize. The very next morning we sighted another. As our boat approached, the Spaniard's gunner took a shot at her, and struck off the arm of one of our sailors, whereat we were very sorry, for he was a proper young seaman. Howbeit, our boat forced them to yield without further loss, and we were the richer by another forty tuns of wine. The Spanish crew were set on shore. It was a quick return from their intended voyage to the Indies.

On our way to Cape Blanco on the African coast, we met again the *Lady*. We greeted her with joy, but were soon grieved to hear from her that the *Paul* had lost her main-mast again and had returned to England. This, if true, was serious, and it caused some commotion on the lower deck. I told Captain Hampton that the men were talking of this news. My duties with the guns took me much among the men, and I knew what was going on. "I do not believe a word of the tale," said the captain. "Mr. Barking is not the man to play us false. Bide awhile, and see what the men will do."

Soon a party of five of the seamen came aft and asked permission to speak to the captain. I was pleased to notice no sullen mutinous air about them. Captain Hampton summoned the master, the mates, the boatswain, and me, the master-gunner, about him, and said to these men:

"Well, what is it?"

"Asking your pardon, sir," said the spokesman, "our forces were small enough for a voyage to the

Brazils when all our strength was here. But now that the *Paul* hath left us, the plan is clean overthrown."

"What do you want me to do?" demanded Captain Hampton.

"Bear up for the West Indies, sir, and there make the voyage. Collect what plunder we can, and so home."

"Look ye," said the captain firmly. 'I told you all when we left England that I meant to go to Pernambuco, and go I will. The appointed meeting-places are the Canary Islands and Cape Blanco. Captain Barking, if alive, will be at Cape Blanco. He is as resolute to perform this voyage as I am. Now I hope you are all satisfied, for to go any other course than I have determined, I say I will not."

That was the way to talk to them, thought I. The captain did not intend to have any divisions in this ship. The party saluted respectfully enough and went for'ard. There was no more trouble, and our anxiety was soon turned to joy. For on coming to Cape Blanco we met the *Paul*, to the great comfort of us all. We cheered her as we came to anchor alongside, while the musicians played a merry jig. Captain Barking had actually taken from Spaniards and Portugals no fewer than twenty small barks, caravels, and fishing-boats. Mr. Hampton manned four of the largest and took them along with him. From a pilot captured in them we had the glad news that one of the great carracks come out of the East Indies had been cast away in Pernambuco, and that all her goods were stacked under cover upon the

quays in the lower town. The men fell to singing when this good report came to them, and were then as eager to go for Pernambuco as they had been to forsake it. I thought of my prize-money, and got out my old fiddle. At that time, King Philip of Spain had swallowed up Portugal, and was King of both countries. So it befell that England was at war with both, and with Brazil.

We pushed on southwards, till the sun beat down through the awnings into a hot shade. We came to an anchor at Mayo, one of the Cape Verde Islands, where Captain Hampton went ashore with Captain Barking, and the commander of the *Lady*, whose name I forget. He desired to find a suitable place to assemble our galley-frigate, which we had brought from England to serve for landing-parties. The frame-work was brought on land, and the carpenters went about their business with her to set her up. A guard was posted to keep the Portugals away. While we were thus employed about the galley, we descried four sail. Seeing us at anchor, they came in and anchored beside us. They proved to be Captain Fenimore in his ship *Tiercel*, also a Biscayan that he had taken off Cape Blanco (a proper fine ship she was), likewise the *Hotspur* of Plymouth, whereof was master an old friend of mine, Thomas Truman, and a pinnace. Captain Fenimore put off in a boat to the *Goodwill*, and was closeted with Mr. Hampton in his cabin. The upshot was that an agreement was signed, they to join us, and to receive a fourth share of all booty and pillage. Captain Hampton, like a wary fighting man, believed in nav-

ing an overwhelming force in the vital place. Strong as we now were, we could look forward with confidence to a good prize. Three weeks or thereabouts we stayed in this place before the galley was finished. When it was done, she was manned and fitted with oars, fourteen a side. Mr. Watson, an honest, skilful mariner, was given the command.

After watering we went for Brazil. Our first landfall was somewhat to the south of Cape St. Augustin, and we made straightway for Pernambuco. We arrived off the harbour about midnight, all of us in safety. Captain Hampton, our general, got into his boat and went from ship to ship, giving orders for the boat parties for the next morning. He himself went in the galley, with about eighty men from the *Goodwill*, armed with all manner of weapons, muskets, pikes, bills, bows and arrows. I went in her in charge of a good saker in the bows and two small pieces. All the boats were to be ready to move at break of day. The great ships were not to go in till the fort and town were in our hands, but the five small vessels we had brought from Cape Blanco were lightly manned, and were ordered to sail in with the boats. The reason for this was that there were three large Dutch ships riding at the entrance to the harbour, and the general did not know what they would do. If the Hollanders should try to stop us, the five were to board and deal with them as best they could.

When the morning was come, the strong ebb tide met us before we could get in, and therefore we were forced to lie outside until two o'clock in the

afternoon in full view of the town. During the morning our great ships exchanged a few shots with the fort at about demi-culverin range, but with little effect on either side, so far as I could see. Meanwhile, we in the boats were consumed with impatience. To our joy, as we moved forward with the tide, the Hollanders laid out hawsers and moved themselves out of our way. "God be praised," said Captain Hampton, "that removes the greatest danger of all." Springing to his feet, he took off his hat and bade us cheer the Hollanders, which we did with three mighty shouts. Before we had passed them, I saw a boat coming to us from the shore. "Here is a Portugal, sir, coming alongside." "Way enough," was the order, and we abode his arrival. He said that the Governor wished to know what the English were war'g. "Tell your Governor," said the general, "that I have come for the goods out of the carrack, and I mean to have them. I have no more to say." All morning the townsmen had been mustering under arms, hundreds of them, and they marched into the fort over against the harbour entrance. "Mr. Watson," said the general, "you are to run the galley ashore yonder, right under the fort, as hard as you can. Never mind if you break her. So much the better." And he sent a messenger round to the other boats, strictly enjoining them to do the same.

It was now two o'clock, and the tide was at the flood. "Forward," said the general. "God and St. George defend us!" And now the men in the fort began to play with their ordnance upon the galley

and the boats. Their shooting was hurried and wild. They tore away a great piece of our ensign, but hit not any man of us. Our sail was set, and our men bent hard to their oars. We ran her aground with such force that we piled her up with a broken back, not a quoit's toss from the fort. Captain Hampton leapt into the water and splashed ashore. I followed, and all our men. The fort's gunners had their ordnance loaded mightily to dispute our landing. Howbeit, they misjudged badly, for, being frightened to see us land, they had depressed their pieces overmuch, and shooting too hastily, planted all their shot in the sand at our feet. One man lost a leg, but save for him, poor fellow, not one of us was hit. Seeing this, the general, pointing to the fort with his sword, cried out, "Onward, my masters, on them! The fort is ours!" We all rushed to the assault. The fort was but a breastwork and an entrenchment. All those hundreds of armed men forthwith clambered out of their trenches and ran to the rear, leaving their guns and all in our possession. At once I set about making good the capture, reversing the guns to play upon the enemy, should he return. Captain Hampton, our wise and valiant general, waved a flag to the ships, bidding them to weigh anchor and come in, which they did with all speed.

"Now for the town!" said the general. "Do you stay here, Mr. Heard, and keep the fort garrisoned. And keep a sure watch, especially after dark."

As he marched with a strong body of men towards the lower town, which was only a few hundred yards

away, the population swarmed down to the quayside and scrambled into boats and caravels. In this lower town were about one hundred houses, and all the merchandize of the Indies was stored in sheds by the wharves. Darkness fell not long after the general had gone, but a man coming down with a message from him told me the news.

"What is the booty?" I asked him.

"Rich," exclaimed the man. "A great store of sugar, pepper, cinnamon, mace, nutmegs, calico-cloth, and all manner of Indian trade."

"Have they taken the town?"

"Yes, sir, the lower town, no trouble at all. The general and his company are in the midst, Captain Benimore's party at the south end, and Captain Barking to the north. The general has commanded that no man shall break into or pillage any warehouse, under pain of severe punishment and loss of his share of prize-money. It seemeth there will be no chance for poor honest men to pick up aught for themselves. Captain Hampton will be obeyed, mark my words."

Indeed he was. During the whole time we were in the port there was no case of looting nor of house-breaking, which was noteworthy. for despite all orders to the contrary, mariners and soldiers are much given to pillaging and plunder. They look to make more thereby than by their prize-money.

Within two days our men surrounded the town by a nine-foot barricade. A river ran behind the town, and so by land there was only one narrow approach. I had a fort built to command this way, and put

therein five pieces of ordnance from the works we captured at the first assault. The town was now fairly in our possession, and it was clear that the next thing to be done was to settle with the Hollanders, at whose mercy still lay the entrance to the harbour. William Brandts, the surgeon of the *Goodwill*, who had lived in Holland for long before he came to England, and was a sensible man withal, was sent to the Dutch ships with instructions to say who we were and what we were after, and to assure them that no violence of any sort would be offered unto them. The biggest of the Hollanders was of four hundred and fifty tons, and seeing that we had more goods taken in the warehouses than we could load into our ships, the general offered them freight to England, to take or not as they chose. This nation is always stubborn and cautious at first, but when they were sure of our good intentions, they accepted the freight and joined in with us.

Four days after we had taken the town we had some more foreign visitors. A ship and a pinnace appeared off the mouth of the harbour. Seeing our flags, they put out French colours and desired to come in. Captain Hampton willed them to do so, and the French captain came ashore. The master and I were down at the quay to welcome him and bring him to Captain Hampton. As he stepped out of the boat, I saw a look of recognition in his eyes, and before I could say aught, he had embraced me warmly. It was Monsieur Charles de la Barbotière, with whom I had been shipwrecked, and whom I had loved like a brother. Joyfully I brought him to

Captain Hampton, who of course remembered him well. I said quietly in the general's ear, "We have a chance to repay this Frenchman, sir. Why not bring him into the venture with us and load him up with Brazil-wood? There is far more here than we can take away."

"Good, Mr. Heard, I will." And so he did. Captain de la Barbotiere was well pleased to join us. These Frenchmen and Hollanders did mightily strengthen us, and the general made good use of them. Most of our own men were ashore garrisoning the town and the forts, so he bade all of our foreigners keep watch at night with their boats, with at least twelve men to each boat. He was afraid that the Portugals might send fireships down the river. The boats were well provided with grappling irons. About this time we started loading. Our people were divided into two parties. One was a loading-party and the other a guard. They took turn and turn about, day by day. The loading-party had all their weapons in good order piled near by, and the guards were kept closely under arms and were not allowed to wander. Captain Hampton knew what good discipline meant.

Just as we had begun the loading, there came down from the higher town, which was about four miles off on the top of a hill, three gentlemen of the country who desired to have speech with our leader. It fell to me to receive them as they came up to our fortifications, and I bade them wait while I informed the general. Captain Hampton looked thoughtful for a moment, then said suddenly, "Bid them wait. I must go aboard the Hollanders on important busi-

ness." This he did, and remained aboard from nine o'clock in the morning until two in the afternoon. The Portugals became very impatient and angry, and twice I sent messengers to remind the general that the gentlemen were waiting.

"What did the general say?" I asked the second messenger.

" 'Are they not gone yet?' was all he said, sir."

"Nothing more?"

"Not a word, sir."

At about one of the clock the Portugals departed, swearing that never had they been so discourteously treated. At two o'clock Captain Hampton came a-land and walked up to the fort. I met him.

"The Portuguese gentry be gone, sir. They would abide no longer. Very angry they were, sir. Notable people, they seemed to be."

Captain Hampton smiled. "Mr. Heard," he said, "I have lived among the Portugals as a gentleman, served with them as a soldier, and traded with them as a merchant, so that I should know all about them. This I do know, that when they cannot prevail by force, as here, they will try to have their way by guile. Never trust them an inch. If you begin talking with them, they will entrap you. What shall we gain by it? By the help of God we have got with our swords what we came for. Henceforth I give this command, that if any spies be caught, they shall be hanged out of hand." So spake the general; but he was something hard, look-so-to-me.

Searching the lower town, we found five small country carts, which were of great use for the load-

ing of our ships. A blessing must have been on this voyage, for no sooner had we got the carts than a Portuguese ship came into the harbour. We quickly took possession thereof, and found about sixty negroes, ten Portuguese women, and forty Portuguese men. The negroes and the women we dismissed into the town, but the men we kept to haul at the carts. The heat was very hurtful to our people, but the Portuguese were used to it.

In the lower town there was no fresh water to be had. We were compelled to cross the river to get it. After the first or second time the Portuguese sent out a force to intercept our water-party, and we had to fight for it. In all we lost three men slain and divers hurt at this duty. Moreover, as by land they molested us, so by water they were full of stratagems. Three weeks after we had come in, they prepared five small ships and filled them with pitch and such like. These they brought down the river to within about a mile of our ships. They could not approach much nearer because of our watchful boats. From my fort we could see these preparations, and I sent a message of warning down to the boats. Howbeit, before the messenger could arrive, I saw whirls of smoke arising, and in a few minutes the fireships were blazing like the flames of hell. Downstream they drifted with the wind and the tide, crackling and smoking. "Stand to your posts, men," I shouted. But we could do nothing. All depended upon the men in the boats. We could see them rowing forward with resolution.

"Good lads!" yelled our excited men. "They're

grappled the first one. They're towing her to the bank. There goes the second, and the third. Oh, well done!

The fireships, still flaring high and sending forth black clouds of smoke, were burning themselves out harmlessly on the river-bank. Thus was our general's foresight justified. Without it we had been quite lost and undone.

About a week later I went back to the *Goodwill* and abode there that night. At eleven o'clock I was awakened by a shout from the watch. I started up, and from the upper deck saw away upstream three glowing red balls of fire. They came nearer and nearer. I saw that they were three rafts carrying blazing tar barrels. Our boats, Dutch, French, and English, were keeping their good and vigilant watch. Only two or three hundred yards from our ship the rafts were grappled one by one and towed to the bank. The *Goodwill's* boat returned to the ship to revictual next morning.

"We were nearly defeated that time," said the coxswain. "When we pulled in to throw our grapnels, we found that we could not get near enough at first. The cunning devils had put long poles sticking out from the rafts. Worse still, among those poles were hollow trunks filled with fireworks and spitting out sparks. We put wet cloths over our bandoliers and powder flasks, and waited till two or three of the poles fell into the water, when we grappled. Just in time."

Thereafter fell an untoward happening, a disaster, in very truth, and all through disobedience to

orders. Loading was finished, and Captain Hampton was minded to depart at once. The garrisons were withdrawn from the forts and the barricades. Captain Hampton was aboard the *Goodwill*, and all preparations for departure were being made, when his eye fell upon a small bank of earth, newly cast up, right against the place where the ships were riding. He called to him the master and me.

"They are making an emplacement for some pieces of ordnance, look-so-to-me, sir," I said, "but I see no guns there yet." The master agreed.

"Send a boat for Captain Barking and your friend the Frenchman," said the general. "I'll show it to them, though I think I shall go to-night."

Captains Barking and de la Barbotière came to us. The general was clearly of the opinion that it would be folly to seek trouble, but I was interpreting for the Frenchman, who observed that the wind might be contrary when we would go out, and then the Portugals would have a shore battery to annoy us.

"Well," said Captain Hampton, "it is no great matter. There can be no danger if you do not move farther inland. The work, whatever it is, is only a falcon-shot from the ships. So long as you keep within range, the ships can cover the landing-party. All the same, I am somewhat unwilling that you should go. I have not been well these two days, a touch of fever, I suppose, and I do not feel strong enough to march upon those heavy sands."

"I assure you that you need not come, sir," said Mr. Barking. "There is no danger. We shall see

what's afoot, destroy the work, and be back in an hour."

"I agree that it's a small affair, but you had better take a strong party, in case of accidents. Tell off two hundred and fifty men, English and French, and take the command yourselves. Mr. Heard, see our pieces are all loaded and primed, and send orders from me to the gunners in all ships to stand by."

All this was done. As our strong company approached along the sands from their landing-place, a number of Portugals shot off their arquebuses at us from the work, and hastened away with the labourers. To the dismay of us watching, Captain Barking and our Frenchman began to follow.

"God's wounds!" shouted the general. "The fools, the fools! Why did I let them go! Gunner, loose off a shot to recall them."

I shot off a piece, but the company still marched on in pursuit. The Portugals were retiring on a strong force of many hundreds in a position about a mile away, clean out of range of all our ships. When our people came near, the enemy began to withdraw from their posts. Faintly, across the dunes came a cheer from our men. They broke into a scrambling sort of run, the eager and more active pressing on, and all formation being lost. The general watched grimly. The enemy faced about, surrounded the straggling head of our column and cut them off. They then poured down upon our toiling, breathless fellows and forced them back. It was not a rout nor a disorderly retirement. Our men re-

treated slowly, with the enemy at their heels shooting off volleys of musketry. The turn of us gunners in the ships was coming. Holding our breath we watched the battle. "Now they are within demiculverin range," I said to myself. "Give them another half-minute. *Now!*" I blew my whistle. Our guns spoke. As the smoke cloud cleared away we saw the enemy retreating, while the ordnance from the other ships pounded them with shot.

The general was torn between grief at losing so many good men (for some thirty-five were slain) and rage at his strict orders being disobeyed. His rage quickly abated, for there was no one left to blame. Captain Barking had gone, as also my dear impetuous Frenchman. The general took boat to the river-bank and inspected and cheered the dispirited company. He swore that he would leave that very night, and so did. When even was come the ships began to weigh and go out from the harbour. All our ships, English, French, and Dutch, were fully laden with rich prizes, and God sent us a fair wind for our going forth. We took in fresh water farther along the coast, where there were no Portugals, but only Indians.

We of Captain Hampton's fleet kept together with a favouring gale behind us all the way.

"In another week we shall be in soundings."

"We are in soundings, my masters. Eighty fathom."

"Land, ho-o-o! Where away? On the larboard bo-o-ow

The West Country land lay along our quarter, red and green in the sunlight, slate blue in the shade. We were racing up Channel bound for London River, rolling home. And so we came to the Downs, where we learnt that Captain Fenimore was at Plymouth, and the French vessel safe home in Dieppe. There were certain Queen's ships of the Channel Guard in the Downs, and on leaving we saluted them with our ordnance, according to the custom of the sea. I had sent a man up to the gun-room with some stores, and when the saluting was finished I made to follow thither. What the man did there I shall never know, for he is dead, but as I approached near to the gun-room there was a searing flash and a roar. All went dark, and I seemed to be falling away down, down, down to bottomless deeps, into a forgetting.

They told me long afterwards that the general's cabin had been blown into the air. Happily he was not within, but five men were slain outright and many hurt. The fire was quickly put out, the Queen's ships helping, and I came home to Devonshire, richer than I went, but as ugly as Satan himself. For my face, already marked with the small-pox, was scarred by fire and pitted with powder. You would not think, Dick, to look at me, would you, that once I had a pleasing countenance? Your dear Aunt Elizabeth hath grown used to it, and I never look in a mirror.

Now my story is finished. Winter is over and done.

the swallows and the martins will soon be here again. Spring has come, but I shall go no more a-
round. Matrimony and long winters in time tame
men and blackbirds. I'll bide at home here, and be
laid in Topsham churchyard till the Lord do raise
me up.

THE END